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C O N T E N T S

FOR THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF DIVINITY

Recent Types of Church Co-operation Especially
Beneficial to the Rural Church

Albert Emanuel Raugust

God Known by Intuition: A Study of Edouard
LeRoy's "Le Probleme de Dieu"

Paul Faulkner Tjensvold


The Inadequacy of Impersonal Ideas of God

Lester V. Wiley

FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SACRED THEOLOGY

An Introduction to the Study of Vocabulary Overlapping
of Wycliffe and Tyndale in Modern Versions
of the English New Testament

Roy Edward Wilson



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Recent Types of Church Cooperation
Especially Beneficial
to the Rural Church

Albert Emanuel Raugust

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Introduction

Introduction.

This thesis is a further development of the subject upon which the author wrote a year ago. The other thesis can be found in volume four of the bound volumes of theses for 1931 at Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, California.

The first thesis consists of a study of actual conditions as they exist in general in the church of rural America. In that study it was found that the rural church in this country is not holding the place that it once did. Because of competition it is not able to render more than a partial service. It was found that as far as religion and the welfare of Christianity are concerned, the rural field is very important. This is due to these facts; first that many thousands of young men and women leave the country each year to work in the cities; second that the great percentage of our city ministers were country boys and third that the city has to rely for its raw materials and subsistence upon the country.

It was found that the rural church has been handicapped by divisions into competing denominations. Many churches are at a standstill and have been there for years. It was furthermore found that many churches which have managed to keep going have no resident nor full-time mini-

sters. Part-time workers have to give too much absent-treatment and that does not work in religion any more than in business. It was also found that denominational loyalty is not spontaneous. It has to be cultivated. While denominational churches have rendered a great service to rural America in the past, they should be displaced wherever they are obsolete. The ideal is that people should feel united in Jesus Christ instead of divided into denominations.

In the present paper we shall try to find some of the solutions that are being offered for the problem presented above. We are not without suggestions and actual examples of working plans which are overcoming the evil effects of denominational competition. The attitudes of many people now favor cooperation in church affairs, not so much from the point of view of saving money as from the point of view of doing a much better piece of work.

The problem that is herein discussed from the angle of the rural church is also largely the problem of the city church. The author has not always made special mention of the fact that the rural church is referred to, but in the appendix it may be seen graphically how largely it is a rural rather than an urban problem. It can be seen for instance that part-time non-resident ministers are to be found almost exclusively in the rural sections. Likewise are the phenomena of overchurching and underchurching found mostly in the small towns and open country.

We shall first take a glimpse into the general attitudes

that one finds toward the subject of church union. Then we shall look into some of the plans of cooperation and union that exist. In conclusion we shall try to discover which of these workable plans would be the best to use in the solution of the problem of church competition.

Chapter I

Recent Attitudes toward Church Cooperation

I

Recent Attitudes toward Church Cooperation.

A great deal has been said and done in recent years that leads us to believe that we are coming to a new day in the Protestant Church in the United States. Religion is deepseated in the lives of its devotees and religious opinions are of the hardest to change.

Protestantism in this and other countries has been divided into many sects. The propagation of these sects has gone on and they have won the loyalties of thousands of people who now hold to them. Many people have held to one or another denomination as loyally as though it were their salvation. The church has made a steady advance, however, in a time when from many people comes the complaint that the church has failed. The Church of Jesus Christ has not failed to hold its own in the last century. It has grown both in membership, in scope of its activities and in its social position.

Of recent years there has been a great deal of questioning and investigation as to what would make the church more effective. It is our belief that this has come about largely because of the ineffectiveness and inefficiency of many of our rural churches. It is being felt that a great wrong has been done in the rural field by support of small denominational churches in small towns. It is felt that if

there were a tie that would bind these churches together more could be accomplished and the spirit of such union would be more after the pattern of Jesus' spirit.

It is of great importance that we consider the cost of union between denominations. We have wished that we could get together but our actual practice has not been union. Church union will be costly to all denominations concerned, according to Dr. John R. Mott.¹ It will not come by divine fiat.

It will take a great deal of thinking and praying to solve the church unity problem. Creative thinking and prayerful courage can accomplish much in this solution. Even though the finest of plans for organic union of Christ's churches were in hand, the members of these churches would need to be educated to the acceptance of such a plan. Besides this, we who want unity must practice it even now when we still belong to various denominations. Christians everywhere who desire very sincerely the advancement of fellowship with others must be one in their mystical, vital union with Christ. They must be one in an honest desire to become more and more like the Captain of their souls. We must desire his Kingdom so fervently that we are truly able to make manifest our union with other Christians, so that even the keenest critic cannot find disunion. "We need dwell on our divisions under the blazing light of Christ's

¹Mott-- "The Price to Be Paid to Ensure Christian Unity".
Christian Union Quarterly, January, 1932. p.239

example and command of love, and likewise under the shadow of his cross designed for the breaking down of all that divides, until the great sinfulness of what created and perpetuates separation among his disciples breaks in upon us, awakens conscience and then leads us to confess and forsake our part in the sin."¹

"To realize such unity in Christ and the organic and visible exemplifications of it before the world requires on our part the exercise of larger faith or trust. Let us trust our unerring guiding principles such as: We are members one of another; the Lordship of Christ our common Lord; the golden rule; he who would be the greatest among you shall be the servant of all. I repeat, these principles are unerring. They never lead into blind alleys."² Trusting deeply enough is going to make possible many achievements of which we are no more than dreaming today. Confusion and weakness in the body of Christ can and will be done away. It cannot be done however unless we admit that his church can be and should be stronger. The vision has been seen by numberless brave souls who are working like leaven in the meal for a consciousness of oneness among Christians.

We needn't be halted because the task seems impossible. With the help of God, says Mott, the impossible is easier than the possible because it calls upon the imagination,

¹Mott-- "The Price to Be Paid to Ensure Christian Unity".
Christian Union Quarterly, January, 1932. p. 240

²Ibid. p.242

and also because it draws us to God. We have superhuman wisdom, love, and power in Him for the impossible.

A study of what is being done to eliminate denominational competition is bound to lend encouragement. It is a relief to find that we are not left along in hoping that something can be done. It is gratifying that thousands upon thousands of ministers and laymen alike are giving every ounce of energy at their disposal in behalf of church unity. The army of those who give themselves to this task has not been altogether without success in the past. Especially within recent years have their efforts been richly rewarded. They have done and are doing the only thing to do; they have worked diligently to inform all that would be informed, as to existing conditions, and also as to remedies that can be applied.

Those who have gone ahead have most generally made friends for the undertaking. If men and women are not antagonized they will see the truth and act by it. Much of the progress that has been made has not come to the knowledge of more than a small circle of people. However, those who have lived where church unions or cooperative work of any sort has taken place, are usually in enthusiastic harmony with all efforts along this line. Still there remains a great task before us. The following paragraph, for instance gives a list of the number of denominations working in each state.¹

¹Bass-- "Protestantism in the United States." p.111

Illinois-98, Ohio-96, Pennsylvania-95, Michigan-88, Indiana-87, Kansas-81, Iowa-81, Missouri-71, California-70, New York-70, Wisconsin-68, Nebraska-67, Minnesota-66, Washington-65, Oklahoma-64, Virginia-60, New Jersey-60, West Virginia-60, Oregon-58, Maryland-57, Kentucky-57, Texas--55, Tennessee-54, Colorado-54, Massachusetts-53, South Dakota-48, North Carolina-48, Alabama-47, North Dakota-47, Florida-46, Georgia-44, Idaho-44, Connecticut-44, Arkansas-43, Montana-42, District of Columbia-41, Wyoming-39, Mississippi-37, Rhode Island-36, Maine-34, Louisiana-33, South Carolina-32, Delaware-29, New Hampshire-27, Arizona-26, New Mexico-26, Vermont-23, Utah-19, Nevada-11.

Although it has been generally known that there were too many denominations represented in some towns and rural localities, few of us have known that states the size of Illinois and Ohio could have as many as 96 or 98 denominations at work in them. This is not the most startling fact, however. It is even more surprising that 77% of home missions money in this country goes to native white churches. Furthermore, these aided churches are so close together in many sections that there is one church for every 276 people in the territory or locality. In the same localities there is one self-supporting church for every 444 inhabitants. We can easily see that even this average represents twice as many churches for a given locality as the Home Missions Council feels to be necessary in order to cause competition. A special study was made of 1245 aided churches. It was

found that 44% of these aided churches of the Presbyterian, Episcopal, and Northern Baptist denominations were in towns with other churches. 138 of these were in towns of 500 or less. 343 were in towns of 1000 or less. Thus we see there is great work for the Home Missions Council to do.

This Home Missions Council was organized to foster cooperative work between denominations in each state. It was started March 1908, by officers of a few home missions boards and societies the majority of whom had offices in New York City. With the sympathetic interest of a few southern and middle west organizations in the general plan, by 1917 its constituent membership included representatives of 34 boards and societies whose operations covered various phases of the home missions enterprise, and included 13 different denominations of the United States and Canada. Its aim as stated in its constitution is "to promote fellowship, conference, and cooperation among Christian organizations doing missionary work in the United States, Canada, and their dependencies".

At first the work of the organization was to gather facts and organize them and see how the ideal of cooperation could best be worked out. The following matters engaged its attention:¹

"1. Finding out the best methods for church finance, on the basis of what various denominations were using.

"2. Working out a scheme for adequate missionary

¹Bass-- "Protestantism in the United States. p.144

education which would help to lift missionary giving to an intelligent basis, both as to appeal and as to contributions, in the case of the smaller denominations as well as the larger ones.

- "3. Helping to determine the wisdom or unwisdom of the apportionment plan from denominational experience.
- "4. Finding the best plan of recruiting mission forces.
- "5. Discovering the best method of conserving property value to the denomination involved, in case of a church's removal from one section to another.
- "6. Providing comity committees to help in relocating such churches as well as locating those established for the first time.
- "7. Seeking to creat a widespread interest in the lengthening of the span of human life through the distribution of leaflets and tracts on the subject.
- "8. Helping in a general way to protect the rights of the Indians scattered in various states.
- "9. Devising a Home Missions Magazine of a high standard seeking to create and deepen a widespread interest in the great task of making America Christian."

The Home Missions Council has several important achievements to its credit. Through its commission on New Americans important work is carried on with immigrants in connecting them with friends and churches of their choice. It has helped place immigrants on farms and in timber. Through united effort it has provided six religious teachers in government Indian schools. The Union Theological Seminary in Mexico City, maintained by Congregationalists, Presbyterians, the Methodist Episcopal, and other Protestant groups is the result of Council effort. It has also brought

about division of territory in Mexico for missions, "whereby the North Presbyterians moved from the north to south part of Mexico where they were joined by the South Presbyterians after the withdrawal of their forces from Cuba and north Mexico, and the Disciples and Friends came in to occupy the field left vacant by these two Presbyterian denominations".¹ The Evangelical Union for Porto Rico is also promoting co-operation.

The Presbyterian Polytechnic Institute, San German, used by all evangelical churches, the Congregational school at Santurce, which serves as a Union Young Women's Seminary, and the Methodist Episcopal schools supplying elementary education for all denominational groups show other aspects of cooperation.

The method of procedure recommended by the Council in its annual session of 1918 is the basis in most of the eleven states where comity agreements have been set up. It is essentially as follows: All the religious bodies in the state which care to may jointly try to do the religious work in that state. No attempt whatsoever is made to obliterate denominations or combine them but rather the plan is to get the leaders together to work on difficult problems. Meetings of superintendents and ministers are held and plans are set in order to do whatever can be done together. The working together may consist in redistribution of forces at

¹Bass-- "Protestantism in the United States". p. 145

work or allocation of territory. The goal is to make it possible to get the gospel to all the people in every community. Here are some principles worked out by the Council to apply to English speaking work in the states, towns and rural fields:¹

- "1. A field shall be regarded as adequately occupied when, for each 1000 people, homogeneous as to language and color and reasonably accessible from a given point, there is present one church, meeting at least the following minimum standard of service and equipment:

Resident pastor devoting full time to work of the ministry,

Public worship every Sabbath,

Sunday School meeting regularly,

Edifice reasonably adequate to meet the need of the community for worship, religious training, and service,

Provided that, where a church has or is proposed to have the exclusive occupancy of the field, it will receive into Christian fellowship all varieties of evangelical Christians without subjecting them to doctrinal or other tests which do not accord with the standards of their respective faiths.

- "2. Conversely, a condition of overchurching and competition shall be held to exist where the number of churches in the community exceeds the above ratio, if at least one church per 1000 people maintains this minimum standard of service and equipment.
- "3. Where, within the terms of this definition, an aided church is maintained in competition with a self-supporting church the latter, if it meets the minimum standard, shall be regarded as entitled to the field and the grant in aid to the competing church shall be decreased annually, looking to the complete

¹Bass-- "Protestantism in the United States". p.150

cessation of aid at the end of three years.

- "4. Where no one of the churches in the over-churched community is self-supporting as above defined, the denominations concerned should confer at once to determine what church should be asked to undertake the responsibility of maintaining at least a minimum standard of service and equipment in that community. The following alternative methods of adjustment are generally recognized as applicable under these circumstances:

The unconditional withdrawal of one denomination in favor of the other, or

The withdrawal of one denomination in favor of the other on the basis of a reciprocal exchange, or

The withdrawal of both in favor of a third not now present, or

The formation of a federated community church.

- "5. No new enterprise should be initiated with missionary support in contravention of the above principles.
- "6. Mission aid for building purposes should not be given a competing church as above defined.
- "7. In the expenditure of missionary money in the town and country field the following objects should be regarded as of primary importance:
- As a first responsibility, to build up the highest type of service standard for each church which now has or which is proposed to have the exclusive responsibility for a field.
- To strengthen particularly for demonstration purposes, churches which face situations of unusual difficulty or unusual strategic importance.
- Adequately to occupy now unoccupied communities and to serve now unreached populations.
- "8. Where the work of a given church is to be discontinued, the policy should be definitely to dissolve its organization and unite its membership with other existing churches.

"9. As a step on the way to complete cooperation, competition is held to be particularly unjustifiable if between churches belonging to the same one of the following recognized groups:

Liturgical churches.

Churches practising the baptism of believers only.

Churches of other denominations represented in this Council."

On the basis of these general recommendations of procedure and principles of comity, eleven states have formed councils and are now working. In Montana, for instance, the work of reallocation has been completed. Thirty-one territories or districts were assigned to single denominations. In 39 instances further investigation was started to allocate territories. There were remaining 29 reported places without religious work, which were given over to reliable mission boards. Thus 107 places were allocated and unity in effort reduced sectarian competition in occupied fields to a minimum. Besides this, a clearer vision of the needs was seen. The people involved were better prepared to understand each other and to work together. In Idaho 62 fields are allocated. In western Washington the council is aiming for only one church per community till the community grows enough to support another church easily. In Texas 44 towns had North and South Presbyterian churches which were united between 1908 and 1917. The U.S.A. church gave the U.S. church 20 churches and the U.S. gave the U.S.A. 24 churches.

Under the direction of the councils provision is being made for larger pastorates and more adequate salaries for town and country churches. Denominational community churches are displacing part-time non-resident pastorates. In one year the Methodist Church withdrew missionary aid from over 200 competing churches. Home mission board officials seem to approve cooperation in general. Bass reports questionnaires sent to 30 home mission boards of which 26 answered as follows:¹

"1. Is there any effort made to avoid overlapping of your board's work with that of other denominational boards working in the same territory?

22 replied affirmatively; 4 in the negative.

"2. Do you expend funds to help weak churches located in towns and localities where boards of other denominations are doing the same?

15 confessed that they did; 9 denied doing so, and 2 were uncertain.

"2a. Is there anything being done to avoid this?

18 said yes; 3 replied no; 5 gave no answer.

"3. Do you conduct investigations for the purpose of gathering information touching the matter of overchurched and under-churched conditions of towns and localities?

19 replied that they did; 7 that they did not.

"4. What is the general position of your board relative to the matter of interdenominational missionary activities?

19 boards were favorably inclined; 4 opposed; 2 were on the fence; 1 did not answer.

"5. What is your personal opinion on the subject

¹Bass-- "Protestantism in the United States". p.160

of interdenominational cooperation in missionary work?

20 strongly favored it; 3 were as strongly opposed; 3 did not answer."

Thus far we have seen that there are various general plans being worked out to effect cooperation in the home mission field. Besides this there are additional movements toward cooperation between various groups of denominations of the same family. In the Lutheran family group: Five synods making up 6/7 of the Norwegian Lutherans in the United States have been brought together in the Norwegian Lutheran Church in America, between 1890 and 1917. The Evangelical Synodical Conference of America founded in 1872 has united the synods of Missouri, Joint Wisconsin, Slovak, Evangelical Lutheran, and the Norwegian Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. The United Lutheran Church in America, started in 1918, united under one head the General Synod, the General Council, and the United Synod of the South. These three had been the largest and most influential Lutheran bodies, with over 800,000 members. The National Lutheran Council is a body through which 14 of the 16 Lutheran bodies cooperate. Complete mergers are the next step.

Organic union between the Cumberland Presbyterian body and the Presbyterian Church North was consummated in 1905. In 1920 the Welsh Calvinistic Presbyterian Church joined the Presbyterian Church of the U.S.A. The North and South Presbyterian Churches have not united yet but overlapping is

lessened. The Presbyterian Church of the U.S. in 1920 authorized negotiations for union with the Presbyterian Church of the U.S.A. The Presbyterian North and South and United Presbyterian and Reformed Church in America are seeking closer relationships. Hope is held for a union of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches soon.

The Baptist family is slow to unite. The United Baptist denomination is a union of "Separate" and "Regular" Baptists. In 1915 the General Baptists formed a cooperative union with the North Baptist Convention.

The Methodist Protestant group divided in 1858 over slavery and in 1877 reunited. The North and South Methodist Churches started negotiation in 1876 for reunion. Finally in 1924 both the South Methodist at Chatanooga, Tennessee, and the Methodist Church North at Springfield, Massachusetts endorsed the work of committees of bishops appointed to work out a plan of reconciliation. The vote was 802 for and 13 against union. The Methodist Episcopal Church voted union and the South Church voted further committee work. "The Methodists have an ecumenical conference, however, which unites for consultation and practical cooperation all the Methodists of the world."¹

"Another instance of the family group union was that which took place between the Home and Foreign Missionary Work Society and the Christian Alliance for Home Work in

¹Bass-- "Protestantism in the United States". p.225

1895 which resulted in the formation of the Christian and Missionary Alliance."¹

Some hold that it is absolutely imperative that all separate portions of denominations must reunite before it will be possible for unrelated denominations to unite, but that surely is unnecessary. We cannot wait forever for certain small groups to become Christian before we shall start thinking of a larger brotherhood of God's men and women, in larger denominations which are anxiously waiting for the day when they shall be a united people working for the Kingdom together. More people than it is ordinarily supposed are ready for church union between unrelated denominations. They feel that the friendship which centers around their common love for Jesus Christ is enough to unite them.

In 1918 the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. issued a call for a conference to consider church union. In response in December 1918 the Presbyterian Church and 17 other denominations met in Philadelphia and in this conference a committee of at least one member of each denomination was appointed to consider organic unity. A second conference was held February 2-6, 1920 and the Philadelphia plan was adopted:²

"(a) The title of the union is to be "The

¹Bass-- "Protestantism in the United States". p.225

²Ibid. p.226 ff.

United Churches of Christ in America".

- "(b) Each constituent church is to reserve the right to retain its creedal statement, polity, and mode of worship.
- "(c) The United Churches of Christ in America is to act through a council and such commissions of judicial boards ad interim as the council may appoint.
- "(d) The Council has the privilege of promulgating its own bylaws and rules of procedure.
- "(e) The constituent churches are to effectuate the decision of the Council when the laws of a state, charter of a board, or other ecclesiastical corporation requires, but, except as limited by the plan, shall govern themselves under the existing denominational constitution.
- "(f) The specific duties of the Council are:
 1. to harmonize and unify the work of the United Churches;
 2. to consolidate work of missionary activities in overchurched areas as far as allowed by the laws of the land or of the denomination affected;
 3. to decide on matters of mutual concern submitted to the Council by participating denominations."

This plan was formulated for the purpose of attempting a real organic union.

So far the Congregational Church is really the only one which has fully endorsed this plan. 88% were for it. The committee still exists. Between 1801 and 1837 Congregationalists and Presbyterians cooperated somewhat on home missionary enterprises but later they discontinued in 1837. A recent development has taken place between Congregationalists and Universalists which if adopted by authoritative bodies may result in organic unity of the two bodies. Here

are some pertinent recommendations of this proposal:¹

- "1. That the ministers and representatives of each denomination be invited to sit as corresponding members in the local, state, and national associations of the other denomination and to participate in their deliberations.
- "2. That the agencies of each denomination in the realms of religious education, social service, evangelism, rural church development, and similar problems be urged to arrange for joint programs for promotion as far as practicable.
- "3. That in each community where churches of both denominations are found, they be urged to study what they can do together with mutual profit by way of union services, the interchange of pulpits and the promotion of common enterprises.
- "4. That there be a mutual interchange of representative speakers at national, state, and local gatherings.
- "5. That the denominational journals be urged to make the largest practicable interchange of editorials and of printed matter of common interest, in order that each constituency may be kept fully informed regarding the other, and of the progress made in the direction of closer fellowship.
- "6. That, in order to secure more thoroughly coordinated movements, no actual steps toward the organization of local Congregational and Universalist churches be made without consulting their respective commissions.
- "7. Wherever the problem of an adequate church constituency presses for solution, and in any community where denominational divisions work for wastefulness, those responsible are urged to cooperate in organizing for more effective service."

Another such proposal was suggested at the general conference of evangelical denominations held in Williamsport

¹Bass-- "Protestantism in the United States". pp.230 ff.

Pennsylvania in 1926. The senior bishop of the United Brethren Church, Bishop William Bell, spoke as a fraternal delegate in behalf of organic union of the two involved bodies. He was most favorably received and hope for the union of these two bodies is not groundless in the least.

The World Conference on Faith and Order in 1886 adopted the following to help bring about the reunion of Christendom. These four points are regarded as "essential to the restoration of unity among the divided branches of Christendom:"¹

- "1. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the revealed Word of God.
- "2. The Nicene Creed as a sufficient statement of the Christian faith.
- "3. The two sacraments, baptism and the Supper of the Lord, administered with unfailing use of Christ's words of institution and the elements ordained by him.
- "4. The historic episcopate locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into unity of His Church."

This declaration was adopted with only slight modification by the Lambeth Conference of the English in 1888.

In 1909 the Anglican Bishops in an Encyclical letter declared that they desired "not compromise but comprehension, not uniformity but unity" and they also requested that "meetings of ministers and laymen of different Christian bodies be held at different centres to promote a cordial mutual understanding".

¹Bass-- "Protestantism in the United States". p.232

The general convention of the Disciples at Topeka, Kansas, formed an association for the promotion of Christian unity. They and many others are falling in line with this great movement which is so rapidly gaining prominence among the Protestant churches. Shall we make a brief study of the work of the Christian Union Conferences that have been held. We shall study especially the most recent of these conferences. So far there have been four Christian Union Conferences. The value of these is of course not to be estimated too definitely; that is impossible. It is our opinion however, that a great deal of good has come out of them, the fruits of which will be seen in years to come. In connection with this study will come that of church unity in Canada. The latter is a very interesting study in itself. It is a great experiment that shows us what can be done.

The fourth Christian Unity Conference met in Cleveland, November 17 to 19, 1931. It will be spoken of in this paper as the "Cleveland Conference". The following paragraphs are well worth repeating here. They are from the title page of the Christian Union Quarterly for January, 1932.

The Conference is "a fellowship of adventurous Christians from nearly every communion in America seeking a practical expression of equality before God in order to raise the standard of Christian brotherhood above every denominational barrier and to win others into the brotherhood of Christ."

"The Pact of Reconciliation.

"We, Christians of various churches, believing that only in a cooperative and united Christendom can the world be Christianized, deplore a divided Christendom as being opposed to the spirit of Christ and the needs of the world. We, therefore, desire to express our sympathetic interest in and prayerful attitude toward all conferences, small and large, that are looking toward reconciliation of the divided church of Christ.

"We acknowledge the equality of all Christians before God and propose to follow this principle, as far as possible, in all our spiritual fellowships. We will strive to bring the laws and practices of our several communions into conformity with this principle, so that no Christian shall be denied membership in any of our churches, nor privilege of participation in the observance of the Lord's Supper, and that no Christian minister shall be denied the freedom of our pulpits by reason of differences in forms of ordination.

"We pledge, irrespective of denominational barriers, to be brethren one to another in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, whose we are and whom we serve."

The first of these four conferences sponsored by the Christian Unity League was held in the First Presbyterian Church of Baltimore. It convened there for only two days in 1928, from January 12th to 13th. This was a new thing. It was therefore not known how many would attend. Invitations were sent, however. It was found that the meeting drew representatives of twenty-five denominations. The total enrollment was in the neighborhood of 650. These came from eleven different states and from Canada. They represented Baptists, Roman Catholics, Friends, Lutherans, Methodists, members of the Reformed Church, Presbyterians, United Brethren, Universalists, Unitarians, and others. At

this meeting a number of pertinent subjects were aptly presented and discussed. Communion was celebrated at the close of the Conference.

The second Christian Unity Conference was held in the Linwood Church of Kansas City. It was also a two day conference, held on January 16th to 17th, 1929. A severe storm hindered the plans of the Conference severely. It also interfered with the attendance to a very great extent. It was found however, that there were present representatives of twelve denominations. The Lord's Supper was celebrated as the final part of the program. All the denominations in the city partook of the celebration.

The third of these conferences was held at St. George's Protestant Episcopal Church of New York City. It convened on November 13th to 15th, 1929. Some of the subjects presented and discussed at this conference were as follows:¹ The need of a united Kingdom; what a united church can do that a divided church cannot do; how much Christian unity do we have now?; recent evidences of growth toward Christian unity; the end of a cycle in Protestantism; the possibilities of attaining Christian unity; the attitude of Jesus toward a divided church; shall we continue our emphasis on orthodoxy and conformity rather than on purpose and objectives? our obligation to the future to hasten a united church; the call of the future for a united church. It

¹Christian Union Quarterly, January, 1932. p.200

was at this conference that Bishop Manning of New York caused so much comment because he refused to allow the communion to be celebrated at St. George's Church. The celebration was therefore held at the chapel of Union Theological Seminary. It was an impressive and inspiring service. It may be said that the fourth meeting of the League was a very instructive one. The spirit of union ran high and of course gained momentum at the conference.

The next meeting of the Unity League is to be held very shortly. The dates for this meeting being May 3 to 5, 1932. There are also to be smaller conferences this season in Minneapolis, Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Albuquerque. One can see from this that interest is shown in what the Christian Unity League is trying to do. Of course this work cannot be done as speedily as some would wish, but when the accomplishments are considered we see that great progress has been made.

The Unity League besides having conferences annually in various parts of the United States has also commissions which study conditions and various aspects of church unity. The commission on "The United Church of the United States" has reported that there are many people in this country who are interested in church unity. A large number of them are interested enough to follow the lead of any really good leader. The difficulty with them is that they do not know what the next step should be. Needless to say there are many who are very well satisfied with the status quo. There

will always be a group like this. People in this class are often not opposed to change. They simply cannot imagine anything better than the present state of affairs.

Since 1910 more progress has been made in the direction of unity than in all previous church history. This is the belief of the commission referred to a moment ago. Progress has taken various forms. A remarkable spirit has permeated the whole of this movement. The old Evangelical Alliance gave way to the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. Church unions of great importance have taken place in this period. Ten Lutheran bodies, for instance, have been consolidated in the United Lutheran Church. Another instance of this sort is the attitude on union taken by the branches of the Presbyterian Church. Surely it will not be long till these bodies shall become one. The same thing is true in the Methodist, the Evangelical, the Reformed, the Lutheran, and many other bodies as has been stated. Besides these prospects of union within denominational groups, there is the possibility of unions between various denominations. The Methodist and the Presbyterian denominations have appointed representatives to see what plans for organic union between these two great denominations could be worked out. Both bodies have looked favorably upon the prospect of union between them and it is not too much to expect unions of this sort before many years.

The entire attitude is one that shows that there is truly Christian life within the churches. Without this life, and desire for betterment the church might be looked upon

as dead. This is however, far from the fact, for the Church of Jesus Christ sees that it has a standard to live up to. As Peter Ainslie says, "The growth of the church into unity is as true to its origin as tulip blossoms are to tulip bulbs."

Church unity in rural America is however, no more an end in itself than an education is an end in itself. Church unity especially in the country districts and in the small towns of America can bring about the accomplishment of more and better religious work. The people who are suffering under the strain of competition at the present time could under a cooperative system truly feel that they were loyal to the Christ who is the head of the Church. Bishop Brent who is highly respected and honored because of his stand upon the point at hand has said that "A divided church is not only an economic absurdity but also a fundamental disloyalty to Christ".¹

The precedents of unions that have come in other lands have helped the movement to a marked degree in the United States. It is felt by some that the mission fields are going to be one of the strong motivating forces to help us unite. The Boxer uprising in 1900 destroyed many missions of China. As a result of these losses it was necessary for the denominations to unite in order to carry on the work. It was found that working together was not only possible but

¹Smyth and Walker (editors)-- "Approaches toward Christian Unity". A symposium. p. 109

profitable there. The United Evangelical Church of the Philippines is another instance of union in the mission field. United work in India is still another instance of this. Needless to say, the United Church of Canada is furnishing us with a good example to follow. The union of the Presbyterian churches of Scotland and the union of the Wesleyan bodies in England also give us light as to possible procedures. World conferences such as the Geneva Conference of 1920 and the Stockholm Conference of 1925, the Lausanne Conference of 1927, the Jerusalem Conference of 1928, and others, are steps toward the best church of the future. They all lend encouragement in this time.

Local councils of churches have gone into fifty cities of the United States. These councils have made it possible where they exist to talk over local problems and try to solve them. These councils have not been able to help definitely on the rural problem, because they exist in very few towns under 5000 population. Several denominations have been working together in the rural field to eliminate overchurching and underchurching. They are trying to work out practical methods that will finally overcome duplication of work and will at the same time take the gospel to every community.

At the Christian Unity Conference of November 1929 reports were given as to the progress of church unity and the great need of further work. There were ten practical points suggested that should help along the cause of Chris-

tian unity.¹

"Preceding every consideration is the unfailing recognition of the saviorhood and lordship of Jesus Christ, and constant remembrance of his intercessory prayer with its central petition for the unity of his followers, to which these ten suggestions are supplementary.

"1. The practice of prayer, fervent and unceasing for a united Christendom and the establishment of such attitudes as prayer generates toward all Christians everywhere.

"2. Emphasis upon the unity of Christians in the work of religious education through every grade of the church school. If special days are thought essential to the work of temperance and missionary education, ought there to be less attention to this profoundly important aspect of the Christian enterprise?

"3. The discussion of Christian unity by ministers in sermons and addresses, by ministerial associations, councils of churches, denominational assemblies, regional and general, and by national conferences. The program committees of all gatherings should feel themselves charged with responsibility for the inclusion of at least one session devoted to this theme in the schedule of their periodic gatherings.

"4. The interchange of pulpits by ministers of different communions. Ministers of the gospel need to be shaken from the inertia which commits them to an undeviating adherence to the denominational routine in their pulpit ministries.

"5. The encouragement, wherever practical and wise, of the interchange of ministers between communions. This custom is already common for other reasons. There should be added this deliberate effort to demonstrate the equality of all ministers within the measure of their abilities and their consecration.

"6. The acceptance of members from one communion into another without prejudice or further church requirement.

¹Christian Union Quarterly, January, 1932. p.212.

"7. The encouragement of the union of congregations of different communions in areas where the work of the Kingdom can be done more effectively by one church than by two or more. This is already widely occurrent in the formation of community churches. It should also be promoted deliberately and courageously by denominational agencies.

"8. The encouragement of the union of separate groups or divisions in the same denomination, where the causes of division have ceased to have significance. Instances of such union are now evident.

"9. More attention on the part of ministers and other Christian scholars to the popular presentation to their people, in the public services, classes and lectures of the Christian origins of creeds, ordinances, forms of worship, church organization and government, and especially the causes of denominational movements, in order to better understanding of the permanent and essential factors in our holy faith as contrasted with those which are temporal and variable; The interest and profit of such studies, and their value as aids in the promotion of the sentiment of Christian unity can hardly be overstated. The growing sensitiveness of the churches to the need of a more organic and visible union of Christians than has been in contemplation hitherto. The voices which are expressing the hope for such an issue of the unity sentiment among Christians are too numerous and too insistent to be ignored.

"10. Reaffirmation wherever possible of the words and spirit of the Pact of Reconciliation, in the bonds of whose spirit and fellowship we are met, especially emphasizing open membership, open communion, open pulpits, and an attitude of Christian brotherhood toward all Christians as the immediate step in the pathway toward Christian unity. Until we have gotten to the place where we recognize the equality of all Christians before God in these practical expressions it will be difficult to speak in any practical way relative to Christian unity, unless we speak by the way of absorption. The spirit of Christ must hold priority over all ecclesiastical traditions, all creeds, and all denominational practices. Jesus says, 'One is your teacher, and you are all brothers.'"

It should not be expected that all men should view every conception just as every other man views it. Especially is

this true in the field of religion. God is the greatest concept that has ever entered the human consciousness. Because God is so far above our understanding and because we are of varying temperaments and backgrounds, as well as training, we could not expect to agree on all the aspects or qualities of God, though in general all might agree. Even though all Christians were united into one church there would probably be as many views as exist today. The difference would probably come not in beliefs but in a common loyalty. It would only be a matter of difference in emphasis, the emphasis shifting from denomination to the essentials of the religion of Jesus Christ.

As demonstrated above, there are many organizations at work and many individuals interested and many plans suggested as to how the unity of Christian people can best be effected. They need to be brought closer together than they are at present. It will take the thought of great, loyal, master minds, a long time to plan a form of union that will make it possible for the church to do a more constructive work, especially in the small towns and the open country.

We have thus far taken a glimpse into the field of study. Now we shall look briefly into various kinds of church unity that are actually in use quite extensively. Though it is not always stated that these various plans are largely used in the rural field, this is the case. By the charts and statistics in the appendix it can be clearly and easily seen that church competition does its most disastrous work in our

rural districts. It is known of course that larger towns and cities have serious problems in this regard, but the condition in many small towns and in the open country have been even more serious. Let us look at some of the proposed solutions.

Chapter II
Church Union in Canada

II

Church Union in Canada.

There was one thing above all others that led to the final step of organic union among the denominations in Canada. It was the desire that the gospel might be preached and religious privileges might be granted to each new settlement. It was not enough for the Canadians to have churches in most small towns; they want the church to reach the people of every small town. They thought the Kingdom of Jesus Christ should be considered of first importance. Denominational interests should be secondary to the Kingdom. As a result three great communions of Canada combined in 1925.

This chapter is not a complete history of church union in Canada. It gives only the effect of the work done. It is an attempt to show that the movement toward union was a normal outgrowth of the spirit of neighborliness. This attitude was conspicuous in the lives of the pioneers, and could not remain hidden when it came to religion.

As far back as 1875 the people of Canada were able to consummate major church unions. By that year three Presbyterian denominations had gotten to the point where physical union was no longer impossible. It may be noted that this was not the only instance of this sort. In 1884 four major branches of Methodism in Canada were united into one denomi-

nation. Moreover in 1906 all of the Congregational churches of Canada had formed a union. Canada in short, has been thinking union for a number of years before the physical union between three major denominations was accomplished.

The original action which in June 1925 culminated in organic union of Congregational, Methodist Episcopal, and Presbyterian churches was started by the Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church in Canada in 1889. This Board had in 1889 appointed a commission to confer with other denominations with power to act upon propositions that would bring about more satisfactory conditions of home missions work. The Methodist Church responded immediately and soon an agreement was made so that if one denomination worked in a community the other wouldn't compete. Soon other churches joined and many missionaries were withdrawn where competition existed. They decided that the Methodist Church should serve people along the Canadian National Railroad and the Presbyterian Church the people along the Canadian Pacific.

By this action the churches along both railroads profited greatly. This was especially true in the small towns and the open country. In the areas not near these railways the work of combining churches also helped the rural churches more than the city churches. It was these districts that had suffered most before the home missions council started its constructive program.

These methods that have been briefly outlined resulted

in the union of about 1200 charges, including more than 3000 congregations being locally unified, while hundreds of formerly dependent charges came to self-support through reorganization and addition to their membership. All these became congregations of the United Church on the consummation of the union. Since, the union the Church of Canada has opened 300 new pastoral charges with about a thousand preaching places, and nearly 500 new Sunday Schools. The new settlements on the prairies, in the remote camps and towns and also among the fisherfolk, have been reached with the gospel of Jesus in a way which the un-united church could never have begun to do.

Cooperation was not limited to the rural field nor to active church work. It has effected every aspect of Canadian life. Colleges that were once small denominational schools were combined and put upon a more firm basis. College and seminary staffs are combined and strengthened. Instead of there being three publishing houses for the publication of church literature this work is done in common. Social work is also an activity of united effort. It is much wider in its scope and also more efficient than before.

The church must be alert to the problems of its time and it is that spirit that the people of Canada have tried to express when they united three major denominations of that country. The church should always be a symbol of strength. It must render a major service to the state which will strengthen the state as well as its individual members.

With the gospel of Jesus Christ, amazingly adequate to unite men and women in the worship of God, the United Church of Canada has succeeded in accomplishing a task. Others have talked about the same sort of a united program for a long time but have never really believed it quite possible. Demands were made upon the churches which they could not meet separately.

The Presbyterian churches of Canada decided to unite and formed the National Presbyterian Church. The Methodist bodies of Canada were consolidated into one great church. This included sections of the Methodist Church which in the United States have tried since the Civil War to get together. They formed the Methodist Church (Canada). The Congregational Church became interested in union. They did not limit their hopes of union to Congregationalists, however. They visioned a union which should include all evangelical bodies of Christians, at least all who were willing to take an active part in it. Thus we see that there was a mutual desire to work together among the three groups. When early in this century negotiations for union began, it was not difficult to interest those who had been thinking that way. After a spirit of separation had existed for the greatest part of the life of the church in Canada suddenly there came a desire for union. This latter was not forced in any way. It was voluntary cooperation which swayed the people. The difference came when the churches of Canada became strong enough to counteract the disunion which was imposed

by denominations outside Canada. Also the spirit of neighborliness in Canada itself broke down disunion.

Agencies which gave strength to the idea of union were the Bible Society and later the Y.M.C.A. with their non-sectarian appeal. Another thing that helped was the fact that in the colleges and universities as well as theological schools the students of various denominations met. They were pursuing similar courses and met in social ways. They could not help respecting each other and also learned to wonder why they were divided religiously. The spirit of union was also aided by interdenominational Sunday School conventions. Provincial, township, and county associations of various types also helped. Above all other movements which worked toward coordination of work was the work of home missions.

"But above all coordinating movements was the pressure of the home missions field, and its appealing need for men and money. The wastefulness of churches carrying on competitive centres of worship in small places, while settlers in areas a hundred miles square were without gospel ordinances, offered a shameful spectacle, and yet the churches were without adequate men to send or money to support them".¹

In 1899 proposals passed between the Methodist and Presbyterian churches which though at first were only gestures of goodwill between denominations soon proved to be more. Cooperation took all sorts of shapes and forms, of united, affiliated, community, and other types of union.

¹Wilson-- "Church Union in Canada after Three Years". p.15.

By 1924, the year before the final union between the three great denominations, there were more than 3100 cooperative projects already under way between them out of a total of some 9000 in the three uniting churches. They learned after twenty years of cooperation that "in the realm of moral and spiritual life, there is no insolvable problem, no impossible task, no insuperable difficulty."¹

Deliberations, joint and separate, for the consideration of organic union, were most brotherly and trusting in spirit. They worked out a creed that is common to the three denominations. They found that the differences were far less significant than ordinarily supposed. The polity of the United Church is Presbyterian; one supreme court, a general council, and eleven territorial conferences, each comprising approximately 300 or 400 ministers and an equal number of representative laymen. The government is democratic in every respect. The church is well organized and functions orderly. "The Church is thus a brotherhood, a society, a fellowship, where all things are to be done decently and in order".²

It must not be taken for granted, however, that church union in Canada was accomplished without difficulty. Even after the Methodist and Congregational Churches were ready for the ceremony, the Presbyterian Church had to hold up,

¹Wilson-- "Church Union in Canada after Three Years". p.16.

²Ibid. p.20.

because of the dissension among many of its leaders. It was feared that there would be many churches which might not join the union. This, however, was also cleared away. The Methodist Church went into the union without a dissenting church, the spirit of a great superintendent of Methodism is expressed in the following:

"Under divine leadership, as we believe, we of the Methodist persuasion have put the Kingdom of God above Methodism, believing that this great consummation is more important than the continuance of any denomination, although we cherish the highest admiration for the history of the church, and the strongest affection for its holy institutions and ministries. Denominationalism becomes a secondary issue when the disciples of Christ centre their thoughts and prayers upon the Kingdom which is above all and should be in all."¹

It is quite gratifying to see a great denomination take that point of view. The Congregational Church likewise was heartily in favor of union, and had been for a long time in Canada. Though it was not such a large church it gave more interdenominational leadership, in proportion to its size, than did any other church.

"The sainted Hugh Pedley, one of its outstanding leaders, probably as well as any, summed up the Congregational attitude to union in his memorable declaration that they were not laboring to build a great edifice for the admiration of men, but a more spacious tabernacle for the indwelling of Almighty God."²

Only about a half-dozen churches of this denomination objected to the articles of union. It was already a united

¹Wilson-- "Church Union in Canada after Three Years". p.26.

²Ibid. p.27.

united church having joined with the United Brethren in Christ in 1907. The Presbyterian Church was the only one that really did not wholly enter into union even though the suggestion had come from them. 784 of the 4512 Presbyterian Churches remained out of the union. Of course these 784 were permitted to keep their property. The unionists were generous even beyond expectation in the whole matter.

"At the suggestion of the unionists provision was made that congregations should be allowed to vote out of the United Church during a period of six months before the consummation of union, to take away the last suggestion of coercing anti-unionists into a church against their will."¹

The non-unionists besides having all their property left to them were given about one third of all missionary property and all other commonly owned property of the churches. This made a much more than due proportion, but generosity seems to have been a key all the way through with the unionists.

Since union, 375 home mission fields have become self-supporting and are no longer on the aided list. In the same period 285 new fields have been added to this list; that means 285 new fields with three or four new preaching places in each. The United Church of Canada has therefore occupied new home missions territory since the consummation of union at upwards of 800 points in Canada. The most of these are, naturally, English speaking communities. 560 congregations have been combined into half as many stronger

¹Wilson-- "Church Union in Canada after Three Years". p.29

ones, which are self-supporting, and overlapping has been almost wholly eliminated.

The way in which the ministers of the various denominations have worked together is most encouraging.

"That denominational lines are being slowly but surely obliterated within the United Church herself is evident from recent reports from secretaries of presbyteries. One western secretary reports that he does not even know the former denominational affiliations of his fellow-members of the presbytery. The almost universal testimony of the presbyteries is that there is a fine loyalty, a deep and delightful fellowship in the ministry of the United Church."¹

Exchange of ministers to churches of different denominations than their own former denomination is the very common practice.

"Old affiliations are forgotten, local exchanges are frequent and cordial, and in settlement, the man and the charge are considered, rather than the traditions of the past. Nine charges out of thirty-five have inducted ministers from a former denomination other than that of the charge they now serve."²

Beside this a great deal of money is saved. Pastors are better paid. There is work for all ministers. The churches are better cared for. Organs have been installed. Mission grants have been cut while the benefits have gone up in proportion. One need only know that twenty-four departments have been reduced to six to see what an economy resulted on every side. It is no wonder that the building of new churches and manses is going on with vigor, especi-

¹Wilson--"Church Union in Canada after Three Years". p.33.

²Ibid. p.33.

ally in the newer parts of the country. Along with all this one is told that the music and the worship services are richer and more worshipful.

The creed prepared for the union was "free from subtlety of thought, easily apprehended by plain men, and expressive of the deepest certainties of the Christian life"¹. It was declared by an opponent of union to be a "clear setting forth of the present substance of the Protestant faith in a full, simple, and scriptural manner."² He asserted that it was a statement of permanent value to the Christian world.

"The statement of doctrine in twenty-five articles sets forth the substance of faith as commonly held in the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Congregational Union, and the Methodist Church. It asserts that 'We build upon the foundation laid by the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief of the cornerstone'. It declares, 'We affirm our belief in the scripture of the Old and New Testaments as the primary source and ultimate standard of Christian faith and life'. It maintains allegiance to the evangelical doctrines of the Reformation as set forth in common in the doctrinal standards adopted by the three churches that were united. This doctrine of faith is positive, constructive, and workable. The experience of six years has proven it to be wholly acceptable to our own ministers and people. During those years this statement has received the approval of an ever widening circle of Christian people outside our own church and country."³

In order that we may better get the feeling of some of the leaders of the United Church we shall see what they

¹Christian Union Quarterly, January, 1932. p.204

²Ibid. p.204

³Ibid. pp.204ff.

have to say about it. The Reverend Mr. George C. Pidgeon, M.A., D.D., the first moderator of the United Church, has expressed his views by saying that

"We have entered into a far wider and richer fellowship. Men of the same faith now have intimate communion in the things of God. Men who have co-operated in the past now have decided to be one. The world has been led one more step closer to the reunion of Christendom."¹

Rev. W. T. Gunn, M.A., D.D., was moderator in 1920 and indicates his convictions on provincial cooperation as follows:

"The saving of the churches through cooperation is beyond estimation. In one district alone, that of New Ontario in the north, cooperation resulted in saving of eighty men and \$50,000 a year to the Methodist and Presbyterian Mission Boards; and still the work was better done. It is significant in this connection that after the formation of the United Church the demand for community churches ceased, the desire for local unity and simplicity of faith and breadth of fellowship apparently having found complete satisfaction in the United Church. Twenty-six administrative boards were combined into six, and our headquarters staff with care and consideration for men and interests involved has been reduced to about sixteen officers and many thousand dollars in expense. Our fifteen theological colleges have been combined in eight, each strategically located in connection with our provincial universities. Givings to the general work of the church have increased twenty per cent over the givings of the same people in the three churches prior to the Union."²

He asked the question, "Do we really enjoy the new mixed fellowship?" and answered it as follows:

"Beyond all our expectations. Twenty years ago the Joint Commission expected that it would

¹Christian Union Quarterly, January 1932. p.205.

²Ibid. p.206.

take a generation for our people to love our new church as well as they loved the churches in which they had been born and brought up. To our happy surprise we found that we had been united before we had met. As one of our good Scottish university presidents stated, 'I have been looking for those "temperamental differences" and cannot find them. They are all just plain "bunk". The fact is that visitors to our United Church meetings find that it is impossible to guess our former church affiliations either on the platform or in the pew, and we ourselves have ceased to pay much attention to them.'

"During all the twenty years of negotiations and during these first four years of the United Church of Canada there has never been one single vote divided upon the old denominational lines. At our last General Council there was such a general spirit of genial affection that man after man of the three former churches came to the Moderator saying that never in the former bodies had they experienced so united and affectionate a meeting. We were conscious that the love of God had been shed abroad in our hearts for one another and for our new church."¹

The present moderator, Rev. E. H. Oliver, M.A., F.R.S.C., in a recent interview stated that

"The United Church is stronger in membership, more vigorous in missionary effort both at home and abroad, and less conscious of the different strands of tradition than at the time of Union in 1925. I have visited our church from coast to coast. I have seen it in action in pioneer settlement and frontier mission and stately city church. It has never been more magnificent than at this moment in vision and sympathy, in sacrificial spirit and consciousness of unity."²

Sometime during the fall of 1930 the New York Christian Advocate published an article on the subject of United Canadian Churches, entitled "A Going Concern". A quotation

¹Christian Union Quarterly, January 1932. p.206.

²Ibid. p.207

from that article follows:

"A sheet of figures gives the statistical history of the United Church of Canada in terms that should hearten all friends of Christian union. Presbyterians, Methodists, and Congregationalists came under one roof tree in 1925. Then there were 600,522 members. Now there are 662,253, a gain each year of union. The 369,562 families are now 417,815. Though there are fewer Sunday Schools, there are 56,000 more pupils and 64,000 more members in young people's societies. Though church property values have risen by \$14,000,000 the debt is up only \$1,700,000. Pastors' salaries show a gain of \$500,000 despite the depression, which has reduced the total amount raised by the United Church from \$16,968,243 in 1925 to 1926, to \$16,421,286 in the year ending December 31, 1930."

An editorial from the "Record" says:

"The 1930 statistical report of the Board of Religious Education shows a total membership of 78,735 in young people's societies as over against 73,838 in 1929. The young people in the presbyteries are accepting the missionary challenge to special endeavor in a heartening way. In 1929 they raised \$39,769.47 for missionary and maintenance funds, including special objects of support. In 1930 they raised \$46,534.01, an increase of \$6,764.44. This progress in the young people's work is most encouraging and is evidence of a vitality within the life of the church."

Before church union was consummated in Canada it was hoped by many leaders that union would strengthen the work of the church. Union has strengthened individual churches as well as the church as a whole. Ministers understand each other better. From the words of these leaders we learn that the denominational differences between laymen and ministers alike are swallowed up in this great enterprise. They feel that the Kingdom of Jesus is nearer than before.

The task was not easy. Sacrifice was necessary. Self-

seeking was impossible. The great goal had to be kept in mind at any expense.

Now that the price has been paid by the uniting churches of Canada we are looking to her as an example of what we should do. It is our belief that the Church of Canada is better prepared to face the problems that command the attention of the church than she was before 1925. It is our hope that we shall be able to learn from her so that we shall know better how to meet our problems.

Chapter III
The Larger Parish Plan

III

The Larger Parish Plan.

The larger parish plan is one wherein the circuit system of ministry is brought up to date. The circuit rider had of necessity to cover a large territory to reach a spot where he was scheduled to preach. He was of great benefit and aid to the people into whose lives he came. Brave, true, and generous, he wouldn't stop travelling until it became physically impossible for him to go further.

Circuit riders have grown a little out of date in certain sections of the country in spite of their good and faithful work. The ministry is still necessary but methods need revision. Circuit riders of the past often crossed each others paths nearly every day and sometimes oftener. The points covered were small and even a great number of them covered by one man brought a very small income. Thus limited he could do little but preach and hurry on.

The new idea of a circuit does away with overlapping of the work of various ministers and will make possible a completely balanced ministry in every area covered by the larger parish plan. The main difference between the old and new plans is not the size of the parish as the name would seem to indicate. The larger parish plan covers a territory equal to the old style circuit with possibly an equal number of men, but each man has different duties. Instead of

there being three preachers in a certain area there is a preacher who is also the pastor. He takes care of the worship services in the parishes as well as visiting in the homes and doing personal work. Besides a full-time minister the plan calls for a full-time religious education worker and a full-time worker to conduct the social and recreational work of the parish.

The ideal of course is to have a group of men doing the work of a parish, but it is said that a well trained man can do more in the larger parish plan than several men can do under the old competitive circuit system. Voluntary assistance is a great asset in this system. The man at the head has to be able to organize work for a great deal of voluntary service that always comes upon request.

Under this system the parish workers either live in a common center of the parish or live in different districts so chosen that the workers may be of greatest service. In some larger parish systems the spiritual adviser lives in the center of the parish and the assistants live in secondary or other main centers of it. At any rate the people of the parish know where the minister is to be found at almost any hour, and likewise know where the religious education or recreation man can be found.

With the degree of unity which is afforded by this system the people are able to put the church really at the center. The desirable community activities are very largely originated in and carried on by the church.

Thus far the plan is not at all standardized or systematized. It is called by various names according to the section of the country where it is found. It is known by such names as 'united parish', 'union parish', 'regional parish', 'cooperative parish', and 'associated parishes', and others. The parishes under this general system often do not resemble each other very much. Plans may be centered around some lay members in the territory, a minister, or denominational authorities. All the churches in the area that can be interested should be included. The project is that of the people and they must feel it their own. It is exceedingly flexible and allows for addition of new territory or new churches in the present territory, if this could not have been done at the start.

With regard to the cost of the larger parish plan the following extracts from articles on the subject will be of interest.

"The amount of expense necessary to promote the larger parish plan in comparison to the program of several small independent churches is a trifle difficult to determine due to the relative incomes and values of the two methods. It is not always upon the basis of mere cost that we determine merits. A workman exposed to all kinds of weather does not purchase a pair of oxfords or canvas shoes because they are cheaper than high-topped logger boots, but determines his purchase upon the matter of service and value. The case of the larger parish is likewise. Its final expense is not determined by its first cost in the gross, but one must consider the larger support possible from the field and especially the greater service of the coordinated method covering a larger area, which makes it of much greater value in the services of mankind. Authorities in the work are firm in their reliance upon the principle of the larger parish plan. Dr. Mark A. Dawber, Superintendent, Depart-

ment of Rural Work of the Board of Home Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church states:

'The parish plan costs more but it is worth more and the cost is only greater because we cover more territory and usually get better men..... It is possible to raise more money so that in reality the cost is less. It costs the Conference more to serve small churches individually because more sustentation is required for less able men; also there is less money available for Conference interests. The Board would rather have the small grants lumped and put into fewer places where some such plan is in operation. Such projects more nearly justify themselves on a home missions basis.'¹

'The cost of the larger parish plan need not be any more than the single church plan. It merely means that churches will join together in one common project. It ought ideally to free money from the support of different plants and allow it to be spent on a more efficient staff of workers. However, remember this: Too many plans for yoking parishes or establishing a larger parish have in mind the spending of less money. The larger parish plan is not in the direction of economy. It contemplates a larger program and even a larger expenditure. It is possible to raise more money on the field with a larger parish plan. This plan is religio-social. It has something in it to interest many different classes of folks living in the community. It usually gets the voluntary support of men who are not interested in simply a go-to-church program.'²

'Rev. Arthur E. Wilson, Pastor of the Mt. Desert Larger Parish, states that for the larger parish plan the cost is considerably greater than the single church method. But he continues:

'There is no doubt that in every instance an increased amount of money has been raised on the field..... We feel more and more that in most cases the country church cannot put on the program it should, using only its own financial resources. Through the state the large cities subsidize good roads in the country, good schools,

¹Green-- "The Larger Parish Plan". p.40 Personal letter from Dr. Dawber, November 24, 1929.

²Ibid-- p. 41 Personal letter from Dr. Malcolm Dana, Superintendent of Rural Work of Congregational Church, November, 9, 1929.

public health, etc. Why should they not do the same for adequate religion. Wealth is concentrated in the cities but a large part of its origin is the country."¹

"Agricultural leadership of today proclaims it a sin for farmers to 'skin' or 'run out' the soil by not putting back into the land what is taken out of it. Are town and city churches any less sinful who continually and thoughtlessly take from the country its leadership, population and means, with absolutely no sense of responsibility for helping to maintain and build up the country churches from which city churches receive so much..... Yes, indeed, the city churches should feel that they are obligated to pay back the debt that they owe to the country church,..... getting their numbers, leadership, and even means from the countryside.... They should feel a real debt of honor in the matter."²

There is this rather simple and yet fair way in which the city and larger town can pay back part of their debt to the people of the smaller town and open country. The latter have had to be satisfied with so much inferior religious work. Even from a selfish point of view the city should be willing to take care of the outlying country districts as far as religious advantage is concerned. Unless the country which furnishes leadership is supplied with the best religious and social life, how can we expect from it leaders of the city church work, modern and forwardlooking.

The larger parish plan works upon somewhat the same principle as a consolidated school, and the individuals concerned receive similar benefits in better buildings, and equipment. Observance of a definite standard in main-

¹Green-- "The Larger Parish Plan". p.41 Personal letter from Rev. Wilson, November 22, 1929

²Dana-- "City Churches Big Brothering Country Churches." p.5

tenance of equipment throughout the parish is possible . This is partly due to the fact that many people will contribute to a union affair that would not pay to a small church. The entire picture is brighter than one of competition in the same parish could be. Because a church center is doing a superior piece of work and is more attractive members of the community are drawn to it who would otherwise not be so inclined. "Slightly interested" people repelled by competition are often drawn by the spirit of unity into the church. The common budget enables the larger centers to be of assistance in the smaller places. The Parish Council, "where each cooperating unit has exactly the same representation and voice, is a splendid practice of democracy in religion. Petty jealousies between neighborhood and neighborhood tend to disappear and wrong distinctions between villages and open country pass away. Under competent leadership, which so large an enterprise can get and hold, even remote regions are welded together into one large community where life is really Christian."¹ Overchurching and underchurching which have been the crime of Christianity in the past seem to be adequately met by the larger parish plan.

Wherever a report is heard of the use of this plan it is favorable. A. E. Wilson has said that there are five interdenominational larger parishes in Maine and that all

¹Green-- "The Larger Parish Plan". p.43

are working well. Besides these interdenominational ones there are of course the denominational ones which are the admiration of all concerned. The effect upon the minister is rather gratifying. It has been found that quite generally ministers take the rural churches to be merely stepping stones on the road to city churches. The country church of the past has not been so attractive to the minister. The complaint has been voiced that theological schools have not been training ministers for a constructive consecrated ministry in the country. The larger parish plan seems positively to be a remedy that will not make this complaint necessary any longer where it is in effect. Workers in larger parishes do not think of their work in the terms of "stepping stones". They feel that the system calls for the best in a highly qualified leader, and such is none too good for those who furnish the chief source of religious leadership in our nation. A rural work of this sort is not, as Galpin says of the old-fashioned country charge, "a sentence to Purgatory". "One third of all rural ministers receive so low a salary that they can live only by working at some other occupation."¹

Dana characterizes the work as being one with a definite program which is detailed and workable. It is constructive and fitted to the locality where it is worked out. It is democratic, being for everybody and being

¹Galpin-- "Empty Churches". p.9

planned by those whom it affects. "The larger parish will endeavor to spiritualize all activities of men by showing them that ordinary everyday work can be made a part in the building of the Kingdom of God".¹

Of course this system will not and cannot work itself. Devoted, trained, hard-working men are an absolute necessity. "The country is no place for a lazy preacher".² The plan is one, however, which will eliminate the "lazy" or misfit preacher sooner than divided or separate churches can. A good minister in this system as in any other is not necessarily the one with the most degrees after his name. A good minister, and one who works best is one with a good education and "drawing power". That does not mean that he pleases everybody, but it does mean that he is of an even temperament and willing to serve to the last.

Here is a statement of attitude expressed by some district superintendents of the Methodist Episcopal Church who attended a conference of the Larger Parish Workers of that church held in Chicago, December 3 and 4, 1918.³

"We, the district superintendents in attendance upon the Larger Parish Conference called by the Department of Rural Work of our church and Garrett Biblical Institute, and representing the several states of Michigan, Illinois, and Wisconsin, desire to express ourselves regarding what we believe to be the value of the Larger Parish Movement to

¹Dana-- Country Life Bulletin No. 2, p.14

²McLaughlin-- "The New Call". p.30

³Pastor's Journal, April 1929. p.12

the town and country church, and with special regard to the work of the district superintendent in his administration of the same.

"1. We commend to the church the larger parish plan as a movement that contemplates a definite plan to meet our varied problems in our town and country churches.

"2. We are deeply impressed with the definite results attained wherever the larger parish movement has been in operation in recent years.

"3. In view of the changing character of our rural fields, and the adaptability of this program to meet these conditions, we recommend it to consideration of the district superintendents and pastors of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

"4. We look forward with anticipation to the solution of the problem of interdenominational cooperation and suggest the larger parish plan as a means whereby this may be attained."

Some results of the plan where it has been tried out may be listed as follows:¹

"1. The increase in salary of rural ministers made possible by uniting the financial resources of all religious forces in the community.

"2. Saving of missionary money by eliminating of missionary grants by competing denominations.

"3. A marked increase in membership and church attendance.

"4. A more vital relationship of the church to the community welfare through unified action of all religious forces under the trained leadership of one pastor.

"5. Resident pastorates to more communities through better distribution of pastoral residences of the denominations concerned in adjustments made.

"6. A more vital relationship of the church to community, a more vital appeal to life service in rural work can now be made to young people who have objected to service in rural charges where efforts

¹Vogt-- "Church Cooperation in Community Life". p. 132

at community service have been handicapped and even nullified by the presence of competing religious organizations and pastors.

"It is believed that the results obtained far outweigh the possible losses that may come, Methodists entrusting leadership in service to Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, or the reverse."

If the testimony about the larger parish plan were all to be traced to a common origin one might have a suspicion that an enthusiast had been expressing a whim of some sort. The report comes, however, from many directions and enthusiasm is not lacking in the reports; the evidence is overwhelmingly convincing that the larger parish plan has worked out to its own credit. It has certainly answered the objection that many have held against the competing church. For instance, Rev. Arthur E. Wilson said in a letter to Floyd Green on October 25, 1929, "We are finding that the larger parish method is proving a real success in the several places where it is now being tried in Maine. A recent survey showed that of the fifty-one churches now being served by nine larger parishes, thirty-six of them had previously had only intermittent services and had had no settled pastor for periods ranging from several months to five years. Since they have been in the larger parish they have never been left without some religious services." Mr. Wilson is the pastor in charge of one of the larger parishes in Maine and knows, not by hear-say but from experience what is going on there. The constitution and by-laws of his parish are included here to show a sample

of the working of such a plan. A sample budget is also given. This is merely an illustration. No two plans or budgets are exactly alike.¹

Constitution and By-laws.

Believing that friendly cooperation in religious and social welfare work tends to avoid duplication and unnecessary waste, that it helps to develop community life and a spirit of good fellowship, and that it makes possible a program of Christian activities so comprehensive as to be of vital importance to the Kingdom of God, we, the undersigned, do hereby pledge our loyal support to the following constitution:

1. Name-- This organization shall be known as the Mount Desert Larger Parish.

2. Object-- Its object shall be to promote the social, moral and religious welfare of the district by uniting in one organization the various activities of the Federated Church of Northeast Harbor, the Union Church Association of Northeast Harbor, the Congregational Church of Seal Harbor, the Congregational Church of Otter Creek, and such other churches, religious bodies and social welfare agencies as may be admitted, from time to time, by vote of the council.

3. Membership-- All persons holding membership in the affiliated churches of the district may become members of this organization by signing the constitution. Others may be elected to membership by a majority vote of the council, providing they are accustomed to spend at least two months of the year in residence in the Mount Desert district, that they contribute annually to the support of the work, and sign the constitution.

4. Council-- The council shall consist of representatives chosen as follows:

Two from each of the affiliated churches, each church voting separately for its own representatives.

Six from the elected membership of the

¹Dana-- "An Adventure in Ministerial and Church Efficiency. pp. 20-22.

parish, to be chosen by a majority vote of the church representatives on the council.

All staff-workers ex-officio, but with no power to vote on questions pertaining to their employment or salary.

Members of the council shall hold office for two years, except that in 1925 each church shall elect one representative to serve for only one year, and these shall choose three from the elected membership of the parish to serve for only one year.

The council shall be the executive body of the organization with power to engage the staff of workers, appoint committees, raise and distribute funds, and provide for such activities as will most effectively carry out the purpose of the Mount Desert Larger Parish.

It shall have as its officers, a chairman who will act as the official head of the Larger Parish, and a secretary and treasurer, who shall act as secretary and treasurer of the Parish.

The council shall hold monthly meetings, keep an accurate account of its proceedings, and shall present an annual statement to the Parish, giving a full report of each year's work.

5. Staff-workers-- It shall be the aim of the Parish to maintain a multiple ministry consisting of two co-pastors and at least one social-service director. One pastor shall have charge primarily of the preaching and public worship; the other shall be chiefly responsible for the work of religious education through Sunday Schools, Bible classes, and kindred agencies. The social director or directors shall develop the recreational side of the community life, arranging for entertainments, social gatherings and various kinds of outdoor and indoor activities.

6. Meetings-- There shall be an annual meeting of the Larger Parish held on or near the first of August, at which time the council shall make its report, plans for the ensuing year be discussed, and other business of a general character be transacted.

Immediately following this meeting the affiliated churches, shall elect their representatives to the council, and these in turn, and

without delay, shall elect those who are to represent the Parish at large. No business shall be transacted by the council until its membership is complete and its officers elected.

7. Amendment-- This constitution may be altered or amended at any meeting of the council by a two-thirds vote of the members present, providing due notice in writing of the proposed alteration or amendment shall have been sent to each member not less than one month in advance.

Mt. Desert Larger Parish
Financial Statement 1929-1930¹

Individual budgets of 5 constituent churches	
(Repairs, janitor, fuel, music, insurance, etc.)	\$2,834.75
Staff salaries.....	6,650.00
Rental and repairs (2 parsonages).....	825.00
Insurance and upkeep on 3 cars.....	700.00
Gasoline and oil allowance on 3 cars.....	300.00
Religious education.....	375.00
Church vacation school.....	100.00
Office and printing.....	300.00
Treasurer's allowance.....	100.00
Permanent equipment, (Addressograph and stereopticon)	200.00
Bible and book fund.....	200.00
Pastor's fund (special speakers, literature, sick cheer).....	100.00
Contingent.....	300.00
Total.....	\$12,984.75

¹Mount Desert Larger Parish Report, 1929. pp 2-4.

Chapter IV
Church Federation.

Church Federation

Church union in the last thirty or forty years has been due to various factors. Pressure has been brought to bear, in most cases that has forced union, or at least made it highly expedient. Some of these causes may be stated as follows: 1. The shift and decline of population. 2. The decline in economic prosperity-- greater cost of living without rise in financial income. 3. Increased cost of maintaining churches and ministers. One or more of these causes has often forced churches to get together or perish. Often these factors worked together with the fact that people of various denominations have understood each other better in this period. A new attitude has been found to exist between people of different faiths.

United churches are not as new as we often think they are. Long ago there arose in New England united churches of various types. Some of them arose in the mid-west. As it happened, however, the most of these early union churches have died or allied themselves with some strong denominational family. In a list of undenominational churches which was prepared in 1924 there were only three undenominational churches which had been organized before 1890, and one of these was nearly dead for years. Only shortly before

1924 had it been awakened to activity after years of lethargy. For several years the Christian people of two or more church origins had attended and supported the same church in sparsely settled regions. Often times without any special arrangement the people of a given community supported one church so that they might together afford a pastor. Sometimes even two or three or more churches of a given territory would have and support the same minister. Various such and other combinations have been in use and have proved to be beneficial. It must be conceded that all of these arrangements did not work equally well but the members of these various cooperating churches understood each other better. It is our belief that the practice of cooperation of these various sorts have made the greater cooperation of today possible.

The movement toward organic unions of churches did not begin until an advanced stage of the drift of the open-country population toward the villages, towns and cities had started. This movement gathered momentum between the years 1870 to 1890 according to the census figures. As would be expected there began to be churches here and there which were no longer filled with people. Union was the only salvation for the church in many sections.

The earliest federated church was started in Massachusetts in 1887 in a community where the population had declined. There had been two churches in the community but they could not be supported any longer. They became federated and in this way continued to serve the community.

This first federated church was found still in existence in 1924.

In other parts of the Atlantic states the problem had to be faced just as it was in Massachusetts. It was seen by church leaders in Maine, Rhode Island, Vermont, and other states that the rural church work was suffering because of declining population. In the state of Maine there was organized an interdenominational commission in 1890. The purpose of this commission was to study the problem of the rural church and suggest means of solution. Many federations took place as a result. One of these which was organized in Vermont in 1899 was traced up to 1924 when this study ended. It had been an effective and active church all the while and was still doing well.

The number of united churches increased very slowly, at first. Only forty-four that survived in 1924 had been formed as early as January 1912. Of these fourteen were federated churches; fourteen including the three dating from the earlier period were undenominational churches; and sixteen were united churches of the denominational type. All but three of the federated churches and more than half the undenominational churches were in New England, where the effects of a decline in both population and prosperity were keenly felt. Of the denominational united churches on the other hand, only three were in New England, the other thirteen being in the middle-west and on the Pacific coast. Thus we notice that the growth of this type of church was

not only very slow, but the greater portion of them either joined a denomination or discontinued as federated churches. In about the year 1912 federated churches began to be formed in many states, in every section of the country, and in the following years the number formed increased rapidly. Although during 1911 there were only two new federations, in 1912 there were eight, in 1913 there were twelve new ones, and in 1914 there were eighteen more. The war cut the number of federations down but in 1916 there were nine and 1917 showed twenty-one. 1918 had thirty-three and 1919 forty-three. In 1923, the last year covered, there were twenty-eight federations.¹

The development of other types of undenominational churches followed much the same course.

"In 1924 the number of united churches found in the town and country area of the northern and western states was 977. They were distributed among four types as follows:

Federated churches.....	312
Undenominational Churches.....	137
Denominational United Churches.....	491
Affiliated Churches.....	37
Total	<u>977</u> "2

For the greater part united churches were found to be in the smaller centers. Although in a study of town and country churches in 179 counties, studied as typical by the Institute of Social and Religious Research only about one third were in villages, nearly two thirds of the 934 united

¹Hooker-- "United Churches". p.26

²Ibid. p.27

churches whose location was exactly known were village churches. Moreover, while only 131 united churches were in villages of more than 1000 inhabitants, there were 450 in smaller villages. As 234 more of the 934 churches were in hamlets and 83 were in the open country, nearly five sixths of the united churches were in localities having a population of the center of less than 1000.

The denominations that have been involved in the greatest number of unions in the past have been: first the Congregationalist, second the Methodist, third the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., and fourth the Northern Baptist Convention. There were also found scattering instances of union that involved thirteen other denominations. One can see the importance of the movement among the denominations by other facts. The Presbyterian General Assembly and the Methodist General Conference both passed several measures concerning the different types of union.

For some years the leaders in the united church movement met in conferences, and by 1925 they had started two organizations, the Community Church Workers, formed at Philadelphia in May 1924, and the American Conference of Undenominational Churches. This latter was a smaller group composed of leaders of united churches of rather fundamentalist principles. Each of these agencies had its own papers, that of the former being the "Unity Messenger", now the "Community Churchman" and that of the latter the "Pioneer of a New Era".

A large number of unions, like the very first federated church, were formed by local people to meet local needs, both because it was the local people that felt most nearly the pinch of necessity, and because the barriers between denominations were less divisive for laymen in small communities. In many cases no precedent could be followed. In the largest number of cases the leadership came not from ministers but from laymen. Thus we can see that even though the denominations saw the necessity of doing something it was difficult to give up churches. Communities could not wait for denominational leaders to solve the difficulty. They themselves had to act.

Because of possibility of misunderstanding in terms in a study of this kind the term "united church" will be applied in this paper to a church combining in its membership, either regular or associate, elements which were originally different in denomination, the elements having been in some cases organized churches and in others individuals unconnected with a church. A church that had won to active participation or membership in its work persons of other denominations, but that had not taken such persons into membership was held to be ineligible for this classification.

A federated church is composed of two or more formerly organized churches of different denominations, each related to its own denominational body, the two having entered into agreement to act together as regards affairs in the local community. The units of different denominations retain

their own rolls, usually keep in the hands of their own trustees their separate property, and almost always continue to send their benevolences to their own separate boards. The two or more units usually combine in calling and in paying their minister. They hold services of worship together and almost invariably conduct a Sunday School together. Often they join in other local activities such as Ladies' Aid work, boys' and girls' clubs, etc.

Federated churches differ from united churches of the other types in that although they conduct most of their activities as a single church, they preserve the organic integrity of each denominational element. This double aspect of federated churches raises several questions peculiar to the type. Denominational officials and local church leaders have wanted very much to know how federation had affected the separate denominational units, and how the double structure had affected the federation as a whole. They asked such questions as the following:¹

"When a weak church federated with a stronger one what happened to the weaker church?

"When an immersionist church federated with a non-immersionist church, what was the effect upon the immersionist unit?

"Did the federation of two or more separately organized units frequently end in separation?

"Did it on the contrary tend toward close integration?"

Because of the keen interest discovered in these questions special pains have been taken to gather and present this material.

¹Hooker-- "United Churches". p.31

The facts for this part of the study were gathered by Miss Elizabeth Hooker. They were collected by means of personal interviews and by questionnaires filled out by the churches concerned. 129 federated churches answered to the questionnaires. 78 sent in their constitutions besides answering the questions. Intensive surveys were made of 29 of the cases that were reported. 145 personal interviews with denominational superintendents and other leaders, as well as statistical reports for 457 units of federated churches give us facts and figures to base our study upon.

From the gathered data it was found that there were 312 federated churches that could be located in 1924. Forty-eight per cent of these were found in the northern colonial territory. It was in this section that this form of union would be expected to be strongest because there the population shift most affected rural churches. Forty per cent were found in the mid-west while in the mountain region there were only twelve federated churches and on the Pacific coast there were only twenty-four of them.

The federated churches that could be located and studied proved to be very largely phenomena of towns, villages, and the open country. The reason is to be found in the fact that in these places competition had existed and federation had to be resorted to. 267 of the cases studied were in towns and smaller places. This is over ninety per cent of the total. This again shows clearly that the most serious problem of overchurching is found in towns and vil-

lages.

It may be of interest to find the denominations that furnished the 643 units for which the data was forthcoming. These 643 units had federated into 303 churches.

Northern Baptist.....	118
Congregational.....	197
Methodist.....	178
Presbyterian in U.S.A.....	77
14 other denominations....	73

Seven eighths of all units belong to four of the major Protestant denominations. In total there were found 146 immersionist units. Three liturgical denominations, the Lutheran and two Reformed bodies, had thirteen units. No foreign language groups were present, nor were there any emotionalist groups whatsoever. Those represented in the groups that were available for study were: the Congregationalists, the Methodist Episcopal, the Methodist Episcopal South, the Presbyterian, the Evangelical, the Methodist Protestant, the United Brethren, Friends, Unitarians, Northern Baptists, and Universalists.

Liturgical type.....	13
Immersionist type.....	146
Predominant type.....	484

In short almost all of the units studied belong to two types of denominations and they are the immersionist and the predominant types. Three fourths of all the units represented denominations of the predominant type. Most fed-

¹Hooker-- "United Churches". p.40

²Ibid. p.40

erated churches consisted of pairs of units. 39 are composed of three units each. The combinations in which units of different denominational types appeared in federated churches were these:

Liturgical with predominant.....	12
Immersionist only.....	4
Immersionist with predominant.....	137
Predominant only.....	149
Total	<u>302</u> ¹

There were very few either of liturgical or of immersionist churches that had federated with churches representing denominations of the same class; even including federations in which two units of such denominations were combined with a unit of the predominant type, there was but one federated church including two units of denominations of the liturgical type, and there were only six combining two immersionist churches. This did not result from any lack of communities having two churches each of either of those denominational types. Many a community had, for example, both a Lutheran Church and one of the predominant type. A similar situation existed for immersionist churches. Of all the Disciples churches in the town and country communities of Ohio, for instance, nearly one fifth were in the presence either of a Northern Baptist church or of a Christian Church. Considered with respect to the ways units of different denominational types were combined, the great majority of federated churches fell into two groups: 137 feder-

¹Hooker-- "United Churches". p.41

ations in which immersionist units were combined with units of the predominant type, and 149 federations, in which each of the two or three units belonged to some denomination of the predominant type.

Though the units federating had low average memberships, when they were combined in pairs or in groups of three they formed churches with average memberships higher than the averages for churches of the traditional kind in communities comparable in population. For a group of 189 federated churches, the membership of each of whose units was published in some denominational annual report, the average total membership was 172. The average total membership of village churches of 179 counties that have been investigated by the Institute of Social and Religious Research was 108. Here we note the difference that federation has made upon the average membership.

How has the membership of federated churches been affected since federation? This is a favorite question of those who are interested in this study. The number of additions to the membership rolls reported for 1923-24 by denominational statistics for 243 federated churches was 2,034. This averages an increase of 5.5% of the total membership at the end of the year. Membership figures were available for 167 federated churches the year before union took place. These figures revealed that the 167 churches had before union 28,609 members. This decreased 1.4% upon federation falling to 28,203. This is only natural because

at such a time as federation the rolls would be cleared of inactive or non-resident members. Though there was an average decrease of three for each federation there is another matter that has to be taken into consideration. That is the fact that there are many members in federated churches that are not accounted for in denominational statistics of the units. It was learned that in 21 federated churches there were 600 undenominational members who were not counted. This raises the average to a great extent.

The study revealed that in many instances the units had been losing membership steadily for years before federation. Despite the clearing of records at the time of federation it has been conclusively shown that on the whole the membership of federated units started increasing after federation. "In Vermont and certain other states, denominational authorities were convinced that through federation many weak churches had been saved from decay and death."¹

The study revealed that taken on the whole the smaller units of federations benefited most from the union. The average gain that was made by them is this: At the time of union the smaller unit had an average of 28% of the membership while soon after union their average was 32% of the federation membership. It was not unusual to find that the units that had once been smaller had actually become the larger by 1924. The general rule had been that when units

¹Hooker-- "United Churches". p.44.

of unequal strength were united the smaller usually made the greater advances.

Another question asked by many had reference to whether or not an immersionist unit encounters special difficulty when joined to a unit of another sort. Immersionist churches do not lose their membership nor identity when joined with others. Some of this group had fought federation very severely because they felt it would lead to impossible difficulty. They were both pleased and surprised to find that federation was benefit and not loss for them. The benefit is the same to the units of all groups, according to the figures. In one place one seems to have a little more success and in the second place another seems to have more success.

The common affairs of federated churches are most often conducted by a joint committee. These committees are known by several names, executive committee, governing board, and the like. They are usually composed, at least in early stages of federation, of groups representing each of the denominational units. The most common number of representatives per unit is three, but sometimes five or seven. The term of service is sometimes one year, but more commonly three years. Where there are quite a number of undenominational members they are also represented on the governing board. The members of the board are usually chosen by their respective units, sitting in separate session. Later on, some federated churches no longer held separate meetings,

but both units voted in a joint meeting on their separate candidates, which were either selected by a committee chosen for the purpose or by the governing board, or were nominated from the floor. Other federated churches chose their boards not as representing the interests of the units separately, but as acting for the federation as a whole, there being a single list of candidates in which the names were sometimes by the denominations of each candidate. This arrangement came to be adopted by all but three of the fourteen churches studied at two stages. Some federated churches attempted to choose their representatives on the governing board and their other officers somewhat proportionately from the denominations represented; but others lost sight of such distinctions and considered only fitness for the task. "Deacons and elders, however, were usually chosen by the denominational units."¹ At the very first the denominational units quite often held separate annual meetings, and sessions; or advisory boards, or prudential committees came together at intervals. But as soon as joint activities developed and the members of the units came to see the uselessness of this, business came more and more to be transacted through the common executive board. The separate bodies gradually disappeared. This is of course as we should expect it even though it is not true in every case.

¹Hooker-- "United Churches". -.46.

At first the federated churches had the arrangement that each unit should raise its proportion of the money separately and pay toward the common budget a certain proportion of the expenses. Where there were only two units the most current arrangement was that each should pay half. Of course the sums were often apportioned according to membership, or with regard to financial ability. The necessity, therefore, of denominational financial arrangements, with the addition of common financial machinery for joint affairs, quite ordinarily resulted in a decidedly complex system. "One of the older federations had eleven treasurers. There were the treasurer of local affairs of the Congregational Parish, of the Congregational Church, and of the Methodist Church, the treasurer of the Federated Church, the treasurer for benevolences of each of the units, three treasurers for the women's society, including one for joint local business and two for separate benevolences, a treasurer for Christian Endeavor, and one for the Sunday School. Two men held two treasurerships apiece."¹

But many churches that had begun with separate financial arrangements for each of the units came to adopt the common canvass plan and to have a treasurer for the entire federation. Of fourteen churches for which detailed information was obtained concerning two different stages of development, all of them federated churches at one or both

¹Hooker-- "United Churches". p.47

of these periods, five had separate budgets and nine had joint budgets at the earlier period, while at the later period each of the fourteen had a single budget. Of forty two churches definitely studied only seven had separate budgets left.

The federated churches raised more money than the units had before federation. This is of course the tendency and no unfailing rule. Besides drawing on the contributors of two or more denominational churches the federated churches surveyed had enlisted wider support from non-members than did competing churches. This is nearly always true where churches cooperate. "For nineteen federated churches whose subscription lists were examined in detail, one fifth of the subscribers were non-members, and these non-members furnished about one eighth of the total amount subscribed."¹ The average contribution was high. It was \$13.39 for federated churches while for other churches in similar places it is \$10.24.

Of the comparatively large local budget of the average federated church a considerable portion went for the item of salary. Before federation many of the churches had been able to afford only part-time, non-resident ministers, and many of the churches had to put up with students or superannuated men. Some had been without ministers. In one case a somewhat isolated community had met the epidemic of influenza without a single minister.

¹Hooker-- "United Churches. p.49

"With no pastor to console the dying, and with great difficulty in securing anyone to officiate at funerals, the local people received such a lesson on the value of a resident minister that union of all elements came swiftly. Under these and similar circumstances, it was therefore to be expected that the average salaries would be large."¹

"For 55 federated churches, the average annual cash expenditures for salary of the minister was \$1,615. Parallel averages for strictly denominational churches were as follows; for the 25 counties all kinds of communities-- \$539, for the group of 331 small farming villages in the middle west-- \$732, for villages of fewer than 1000 inhabitants-- \$1,110, and for villages of approximately 500 to 2,500-- \$998.

"In the 179 counties, ministers serving only one church as did the majority of ministers serving federated churches, received as cash salary \$1,430. In comparison with these figures, the average payment of \$1,615 expended in salary by the federated church, was high, even surpassing averages for salaries received by ministers. The amount per member expended for salary, which for 25 counties was \$6.17 was for federated churches \$10.23."²

There was a great deal of debating before federation as to whether benevolences would go up or down with federation. Data was available in 167 cases. The average benevolences before union were \$389. This sum, be it remembered, was a total for two or more churches then separate; so that the average benevolent contribution of the denominational churches was less than half of this, that is less than \$195. The average benevolent giving for the federated churches in 1923-24 was \$647. This represented a gain in benevolences of \$258 per federation.

¹Hooker-- "United Churches". p.50

²Ibid. p.50

The result in this phase of church work was most gratifying. The increase in benevolent giving is out of proportion with what one might hope for. It does not mean that the benevolent giving of every unit increased but 116 of them did. As long as the added giving of 116 churches raised the entire average as much as this it speaks for the general efficiency of the system for raising money. The average annual contribution to benevolence per individual of the total membership was for the whole field \$2.27 the year before union, and \$3.83 in 1923-24. That of the churches in the north colonial area rising from \$1.76 the year before union to \$4.39 in 1923-24. It is to be noted that according to figures the total amount reported in denominational statistics as the annual contribution to benevolences of the separate churches for the year before union was \$65,034. The total contribution of the same churches later combined in federations in 1923-24 amounted to \$108,089. Since the formation of these 167 federations, accordingly, there had been a net gain in benevolences of \$43,055. This answers an objection which is so often raised against union. The missionary zeal is not killed by union of this type.

One great weakness of the rural church of the past, has been part-time non-resident ministers. It has truly been a matter that has been a curse and a drag upon the entire Christian church. Since federation and other types of union have come into play however, this condition is being wiped out. Of the federated churches for instance, out of 227

cases where figures were available, 72.8% of the entire group have resident pastors. This means a very high percentage of full-time ministers. The figures in the study of 179 counties which was made by the research committee headed by Brunner, showed that for the entire field the resident pastors composed only 35.5% of the total. In other words the federated churches were over twice as well supplied with resident pastors. This is one of the greatest arguments for church union. Besides this, the latter per cent applied to all churches including those in towns. Federated churches were very largely phenomena of smaller villages and hamlets, where the proportion of resident pastors would naturally be much lower than in larger towns.

Several different arrangements prevailed among federated churches as to the denominations of ministers chosen. The majority chose their ministers alternately from the denominations represented. Other federations have agreed to accept ministerial leadership from one denomination exclusively. The latter arrangement was most common in Vermont, especially when one denomination was strongest. Other federated churches had agreed that the denomination of the minister should not affect their choice. They have no definite rule, but chose ministers from any denomination they see fit. This last group is very small.

There is no definite guarantee that federated churches shall remain together any more than that married couples remain married. The fact remains that three fourths of the

federations have remained permanent. Miss Hooker says that after a federation has been in existence for two years it is a pretty permanent affair. After five years she says that federations are almost never broken. Of the total number of federations about twenty had by 1924 either become denominational churches or had affiliated with a denomination more loosely. Seven previously federated churches had become undenominational churches. The rest remained united in federation.

The leaders of undenominational churches have expressed the belief that it would be impossible for federated churches to maintain loyalty to two or more denominations for any length of time. They felt quite confident that federated churches could not last longer than two or three generations of members. There is no particular reason why we should think that federations cannot be permanent. Federated churches are not forced to follow a certain course. Their destiny is largely in their own hands. If they find that there is something that is not as they should like it, they can change it. From all appearances federated churches can remain federated indefinitely.

However this may be, the facts in this case show that in 1924 federated churches were performing several distinct functions. Federation enabled struggling churches that would not unite on any other basis to preserve their identity, and often to increase their strength, while at the same time uniting the religious forces of small communities. It at

once prevented the waste of church funds in duplication and raised the standard of church services and program. It resulted in a considerable increase in contributions to the benevolent agencies of the denominations represented. It brought together, in relationships promoting increased understanding and sympathy, laymen of different denominations, and it gave their ministers a sympathetic attitude toward people of persuasions other than their own.

Chapter V

Affiliated and Denominational United Churches.

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Affiliated and Denominational United Churches.

These two types of united churches are quite similar. It is for this reason that they are being discussed in the same chapter. They are both connected with a denomination; the difference is only in the degree to which they are connected. As far as having a membership of compound origin, they are very much alike. Their financial plans are about the same. In many ways they cannot be distinguished from each other. They have some distinguishing features however, which we shall see in a short while.

Let us consider the denominational united church first. This type of union is one in which churches of a given town or rural locality have decided to do their church work together. Many such communities have not been favorably impressed with the undenominational union idea. They have had a desire to be united in one way or another with a denomination which could give them assistance and direction when they were needed. A church of this type is composed of former members of various denominations. They hold to the same creeds as before. In determining tests to be applied to candidates for membership these churches tried in various ways to get down to the essentials held in common by all Christians. Some churches either borrowed or originated a creed which seemed best. Others required a general profession of belief in the truths of Christianity,

leaving it to individuals as to the meaning. Still other churches required only a confession of faith in Christ, or of a desire to follow him.

Denominational united churches that have been studied are found to come under three general heads as follows:¹

"(1) Churches to which had been allocated through interdenominational agreement the responsibility for certain fields, and which were fulfilling the duties involved.

"(2) Churches that on their own initiative had formally assumed responsibility for certain fields, provided that they had actually received into membership persons of other denominations without the surrender of denominational marks.

"(3) A 'consolidated church' is a church formed through the amalgamation of two or more denominational churches but which is under a single denominational body. If it is under the same denomination as was one of the amalgamating churches, it is said that the other original church or churches were merged with this one."

Of the churches that were discovered to belong in this class, Miss Hooker received correspondence from 72 $\frac{1}{2}$ % or 383 churches. It is from these 383 churches that the information of denominational churches comes.

The first question concerns itself with the origin of these churches. Where there was no church, such as in mountain districts, pioneer settlements, newly irrigated sections or any other type of a new community-- in such places as these there are usually few people and these very widely scattered. They are also nearly always populated by people of varying religious background and belief.

¹Hooker-- "United Churches". p.80

Often a large portion of the population had no religious background at all. In cases such as this it would be impossible to have a regular denominational church. Furthermore denominational churches could not be supported.

In such instances there have repeatedly been found men and women who felt the necessity of a church in the community. They often have felt very anxious to have a minister and would be happy to have given up their denomination for the cause. In order to insure the assistance, both financial and otherwise, that a denomination could be depended upon to give, it was agreed to have a denominational church. This difference however was made. Those who wanted to join such a church would not be required to give up their own creeds to become members of the union church.

These churches in the field where there were no other churches, were quite often started by denominational leaders who gave missionary help to them at the start. The field may or may not have been allocated before the home missionary representative went to work.

Denominational united churches have likewise been started where one church was already in the field. Often denominational united churches have arisen this way from a regular denominational church, because it had a larger appeal to the people of the neighborhood. People of other denominations would not join the church because of denominational differences. Again the existing church wanted to broaden its field of activity. New ministers and sometimes denominational leaders were broadminded enough to make this

possible. For instance, one Methodist superintendent said that in cases where he thought the church should take into membership the constituency of other denominations living in the community without a church of their own he would put members of the various denominations on the board. On one board he put two Presbyterians, two Congregationalists, three Baptists, two Christians, and two Episcopalians. Within a short while all but two men of the board had joined the church.¹

Where there were two or more churches we can see that unions of this type could have been brought about by necessity. In some instances several churches had been started in anticipation of the time that the town should be a city of note. When this did not happen the churches sometimes had a hard struggle for existence until they joined. In twenty-four of the cases studied one or more of the churches that were joined together had been inactive for sometime.

It was also found that the denominations which have united churches of this type are largely the same ones which had had many federated churches. Seventy-six of the cases studied were found to have consolidated under the leadership of one of the denominations represented by the consolidating parties. Twenty-two were known to have picked denominations that were not represented among them at all. This was done in fairness to them who were not in the major-

¹Hooker-- "United Churches". p.82 footnote.

ity. Of 106 for which information on this point was received, 22 had first been federated churches. In this way they remained united churches and were able to attract members who would otherwise not have been attracted to church at all.

Definite dates cannot be determined for the beginning of this type of church union. The idea of denominational united churches has been in use for more than twenty-five years, however. But only three of the surviving cases were formed before 1900. Before 1910 there were only fourteen such churches, while between the years 1910 and 1915 there were organized ten more such churches. The popularity of denominational united churches as well as other united churches grew by leaps and bounds after this period. Between 1915 and 1919 there were organized twenty-six new ones and from 1920 to 1924 fifty-six more arose. They were distributed about as follows:¹ Colonial 16%, mid-west 35%, mountain and Pacific 48%.

This type of union most definitely affected the rural section of the United States. Only 3% of them were in towns. In the larger villages, that is, with populations from 1,250 to 2,500 there were 4%. In smaller villages, those with populations from 1,000 to 1,750, were found 10% of the denominational united churches. In villages with less than 1,000 people were found 44% while 30% were found

¹Hooker-- "United Churches". p.48

to be in hamlets. In the open country were found 11% of the denominational united churches. In other words 83% of this type of united churches were found in localities with 1000 or less people. This type of union is even more a phenomena of the rural sections than are those of the federated churches and the undenominational (community) churches.

It may be of interest to note that there were on the average four and three fourths churches united into one. These figures are based upon a special study of 100 denominational united churches upon which this data was available. There were some instances in which twenty different denominations were united into one church. Altogether there were represented thirty-one different denominations.

Churches of the denominational united type have larger budgets than the ordinary rural churches do. Their average expenditure was found to be \$2,396. A detailed study of twenty-five counties showed that the average expenditure of the churches involved was only \$913. The per capita giving for some reason was over two times as high in the denominational united churches as in the churches of twenty-five counties just referred to. The giving for local expenses of the 383 denominational united churches was \$22.92 per capita while that of the twenty-five counties was \$10.60. It must be remembered that a large part of this higher figure for the denominational united churches comes from the fact that many who are not members still support this type of

church. This is not often the case with regular denominational churches. Miss Hooker said that 23% of the local budget and also a rather large part of the benevolent budget was subscribed by non-members.

The average of the salaries paid by 247 denominational united churches where data was available, was \$1,349. The salaries for the ministers in the twenty-five counties averaged \$1,030. The salaries of the latter were paid by two or three churches while the former were paid by one united church. As this seems to indicate the resident full-time ministers are the most common among united churches. In the study of 179 counties studied by Brunner for the Institute of Religious Research, it was found that about one third of the men were resident ministers. According to Miss Hooker 59% of the denominational united churches have full-time ministers.

Besides the fact that the salaries and the percentage of resident ministers is higher, it is said that the church buildings are more beautiful and better kept. The equipment is very much superior to that of ordinary rural churches. The decorations in the interior of these churches are more tasteful, the pews are often made more comfortable with cushions. The music is of higher quality as a rule. The churches are open during the week for special activities. This is rarely the case with rural churches of the competitive type.

The denominational united churches very rarely suffer

shipwreck. When they are once united they nearly always remain united. This is due to several things. In the first place, the members do not feel as though they had to give up their old denomination. They are members of various denominations that are trying to cooperate. In the second place the property of the former churches was transferred to the denomination whose leadership was sought. This is a very strong reason for the churches to stay united. In the third place, a strong stabilizing influence is exerted by the denominational leadership. There is really nothing that reminds them of their previous state of division. They have so many things in common that they do not think of differences. Joint activities tie people together in enthusiastic loyalty. People of consolidated churches are welded into homogeneous wholes with comparative rapidity and ease.

The affiliated churches are also united churches which have a relationship with existing denominations. For this reason they shall be discussed for just a moment here. Many of the statements as to purpose, membership, and finances of the denominational united churches also apply to affiliated churches.

They desire to serve the entire community in a way which they feel it is impossible for a distinctly denominational church to do. They feel that no distinction should be made between the creeds, ceremonies, or denominations. The church itself may choose how it may want to join a denomination. Some join a denomination for one purpose

and some for another because of advantages derived from the same. The most common reasons for joining with denominations is that the denomination can supply better ministers. This does not mean that they are necessarily better trained but that they are more stable. Undenominational churches have had to depend upon "floating" ministers; that is those who were dismissed from denominations for one reason or another, or radicals who could not fit into a denomination. Many have joined denominations to prevent this.

There were scarcely two of the thirty-seven affiliated churches that have been located that were run in the same way. Some of them are really regular denominational churches with the exception of one or two points in which the denomination has no power. The most of them are undenominational churches however, which simply ask a denomination to supply pastors or to use their missionary money. Sometimes the denomination with which the church has affiliated is given only the benevolent money that the church has not found good use for at the end of the year. Thus we see how loose the connection may easily be. A letter from one church had the following statement:¹ "The church was first organized as a Methodist Episcopal Church. Later in 1920 to 21 it became a community organization, although still connected with the Methodist Episcopal Church both as to the supply of pastors and the use of benevolent contribu-

¹Hooker-- "United Churches" p.98

tions".

On the other hand some churches of this type were unable to meet the financial burdens of pastor's salary and became affiliated with a denomination for the purpose of receiving the aid that a denomination could give. An instance of this sort is reported in a letter from such a church.¹ "Our church tried the experiment of a 'community church' for one year. They were not able to raise sufficient funds for the minister's salary. They later called a meeting and after much thought decided to affiliate with the Presbyterian Church in order to have the financial aid of a big denomination."

Affiliated churches as a rule have grown out of local needs rather than having been started as a result of propaganda. They were not engineered by officials of denominations in most cases. In fact until very recently there were only two or three such churches. As early as 1848 a certain Baptist Church decided to run its affairs on the community basis, but this church asked to be supplied ministers by the Methodist Episcopal Church. They also wanted supervision from the Methodist Church. Only six of the 37 churches in this class that could be found were organized before 1914. More than half of the total number came into existence after 1920. There are of course more than 37 today because the study was made in 1924.

¹Hooker-- "United Churches" p.100

Fifteen of them reported that they affiliated because they could get no ministers except "outcasts of denominations". The desire for missionary aid caused quite a large number of them to become affiliated. Miss Hooker says that one in four of these churches received missionary aid in 1923-24. It can easily be seen that this is high. The study of twenty-five counties referred to before, revealed that one in five were receiving missionary aid. Nine became affiliated after they had tried the undenominational plan, to insure permanence. And some reported that they broke away from the strictly denominational plan so that they might attract people of other denominations who lived in the community but who had no church home. Two reported that they became affiliated after having tried federation.

The desire for local autonomy and the desire to interest those of various denominations have motivated churches in this direction. They have the local autonomy of the strictly "community churches" and furthermore have less difficulty in finding good ministers. They also have the advantage of receiving supervision and even financial aid from a denomination. The "community churches" do not have these advantages.

Chapter VI

Undenominational Churches.

Undenominational Churches.

The term "community churches" is one that has been misused more often than it has been properly used in naming churches. Miss Hooker in the preface to her book "United Churches" says that the expression is used in at least six different senses. It is used often times simply to indicate that it is the only church in the community. Other times it has been used to indicate that two or more churches of the same denomination have united. In some instances the term was used to indicate that the church was trying to do some phase of social work. Some churches have simply used it because it sounded better than simply the denominational name. In some cases they were known by this name because they would accept into membership people of other denominations without any special ado. Real community churches however, are undenominational churches. That is the only sense in which it will be used in this paper and they will be referred to as undenominational churches.

The number of undenominational churches of this type has been variously estimated. It is pretty well agreed however, that 1200 is a good estimate. It was not only difficult to get definite figures on the number of these churches, but it was difficult to get information of any

sort about those which were definitely located and written to. It was found that statistical data about membership, finances and property were almost never systematically kept.

In a great number of cases the investigations revealed that what had once been a community church was later joined to a denominational church. Another group does not concern us particularly because they were situated in the suburbs or even in large cities. There were 137 undenominational churches that were actually communicated with. These are limited to the northern and western parts of the United States.

The questionnaires were not returned promptly and a large percentage of them were returned only after they had been sent out two or three times. Sometimes they had to be sent to the postmaster or some private citizen in the neighborhood. In a few instances the questionnaires were sent to ministers of neighboring communities who sent in the material.

Despite great difficulty in obtaining material, Miss Hooker received mail schedules for fifty churches, special schedules for forty-seven, constitutions for forty-four, and statistical data from the Massachusetts Federation of Churches for all the rural undenominational churches in Massachusetts. The Institute of Social and Religious Research investigators furnished added information about eighteen churches.

According to the data received, eighty churches, or

two thirds of the total number were in villages. Sixty-nine out of the eighty were in villages with less than 1000 population. Four were in towns, twenty-seven in hamlets, and thirteen in the open country. The other one third were in larger towns and cities.

This type of union again indicates that the greatest need for union is in rural America. Over forty of these churches came into existence because two or more churches were in competition with each other. The competition had to be ended and the undenominational church seemed to be the only type of union that was acceptable to both parties. The churches thus uniting to form undenominational churches represented the same denominations as the units of federated churches, about one fourth having belonged to immersionist denominations and three fourths to the predominant type. In the way the denominational churches were combined, too, these undenominational churches resembled federated churches. Most such unions combined either immersionist churches with churches of the predominant type, or churches of the predominant type with other churches of the same kind. In certain instances the undenominational type of union had been chosen because denominational officials had opposed the formation of a federated church. In ten instances one denominational church threw off allegiance to its overhead body and in combination with individuals of other denominations formed an independent church. The other forty churches were composed of individuals of different denominational

origins. An inactive church frequently formed one source of membership. In two instances an attempt had been made to combine four different denominational churches. The resulting undenominational church was composed in both cases of members from each of the denominational churches but all of these continued their existence in competition with the undenominational church.

In small rural communities the union of individuals as an undenominational church was frequent. The people of the community were often of twenty different faiths or more, so that there were not enough of any denomination to serve as a nucleus. Sometimes the only denominational group was of a persuasion unacceptable to its neighbors. The report came from many places that the only choice was between an undenominational church or no church whatsoever.

One of the main reasons for the origin of undenominational churches was the difficulty of bringing together diverse denominational elements on any other basis. Other reasons for the choice of this form of union were "the desire to obtain larger support from persons who were not of any church, reaction against denominational competition within the local community, and against current conceptions of denominational abuse of home mission funds, the desire to avoid assessments for denominational overhead expenses and denominational missionary campaigns, the example of some well-known undenominational church, usually not

far away, and propaganda for this type of church."¹

Union as an undenominational church was often accomplished against unusual difficulties. A considerable number of the churches combined elements difficult to bring together, four of the unions including both an evangelical and a unitarian or a universalist church, and twenty-three uniting immersionist and non-immersionist elements. Again the union frequently combined an unusual number of former denominational churches. Sixteen of the forty combinations of previously existing churches were composed of three churches, making a proportion far higher than that prevailing among federated churches, and three were composed of four or more churches. At least fourteen of the unions were achieved in spite of strong opposition from denominational officials. In nine communities a part of the uniting churches formed new denominational churches.

The date of origin was learned for 111 churches but for twenty-six it could not be learned, though it appeared probable that none were very old. The facts reported were necessarily confined to churches still in existence and still undenominational. Three churches on the list were organized before 1890, having grown out of the old tradition of the union church; two had survived and one had been resuscitated within a few years. The old tradition, indeed, never died out; union churches continued to be organized.

¹Hooker-- "United Churches". p.65

But so far as surviving undenominational churches afford testimony, they came into existence one by one at long intervals, and of undenominational churches organized from 1890 to the end of 1911, only eight or nine survived in 1924. In each year from 1912 to 1916 inclusive, there were started from two to four of those still surviving in 1924. The number formed annually then slowly increased till in 1920 fourteen were organized and in 1921 eighteen. Of the 111 surviving undenominational churches for which the dates of organization were ascertained, at least 88 were organized or became undenominational in the decade before 1924.

The average membership of undenominational churches based on 68 undenominational churches was 115 and the average number of accessions in the year before the survey was thirteen. The average local expenditures were \$2,300 and per capita giving for home expenditures, \$18.83, surpassing the average in a study of twenty-five counties where they were \$913 and \$10.60 respectively.

From the point of view of benevolences this type of union does not show up quite so well as some of the others. In fact some churches broke from the denomination so that they would be free from the burden of benevolences. Critics have pointed scornfully at this weakness of undenominational churches, and the accusation is admittedly a just one. It is proved by statistics. The average annual contribution of fifty-five undenominational churches for which the information was available was \$265. This fell below the average

for the twenty-five counties, which average was \$399 per year. This indicates a per capita contribution of only \$217. It must be remembered furthermore that figures were received especially from those churches that felt best about their records. Many were ashamed to send a report and others admitted that they had made no contributions at all. On the average the benevolent giving for the fifty-five churches was about 10% of their total budget, while the average in the twenty-five counties was 30.4%.

"With a few notable exceptions the undenominational churches had no well-considered program of benevolences."¹ Their giving was hit or miss. They gave to worthy causes which they discovered by accident. They knew very little about the great missionary enterprise of Christianity throughout the world. One minister reports as follows: "There is one drawback to a union church, such as this. It has to make its own program without direction from any denominational headquarters and is accountable only to itself. Where a part of the church has no passion for missions and no vision beyond self-support it is more difficult for the pastor and those who have the vision to push a large program through. In the denominational church there is always more or less opposition to the program from headquarters, but it is rather easier to combat it when the church knows that presbytery or conference is going to call for an accounting

¹Hooker-- "United Churches". . p.67

and the church be compared to others."¹

By many advocates of the undenominational church the future of this type of church is described as very bright. Many so-called community churches have been able to unite discordant elements of a community into a really smoothly working unity. Where individual denominations would have had to give up, the undenominational church has grown. Furthermore, "all the community agencies", said one church, "developed after the founding of the church and are in a measure due to its unifying the community."² Over and over again it was found that in farming communities where prior to the union church the people cared very little for the churches, they were now taking notice of the church. They desired to have the minister call upon them. They had their children baptized, and were also married by the minister as was not the case before. They were happy to have the names of their children on the cradle rolls and quite often supported the church. Business and professional men who were never interested in competing churches were reported to have joined the undenominational church.

It must be remembered however that the success of an undenominational church depends very largely upon its ability to get good ministers. Many such churches have failed after several years of success, when they changed ministers.

¹Hooker-- "United Churches". p.70

²Ibid. p.73

Another weak point, as was said before is the lack of expert direction from outside the church. Especially when it is remembered that only twenty-one undenominational churches were over ten years old can we see the danger of directionless travelling, each church going its own way. In many instances these difficulties seem to be overcome and great success is rewarding the efforts that are being made in the direction of this type of union.

Conclusion.

Conclusion.

We have looked into various plans that have been put forward as answers to the evils of denominational competition. We have pretty well in mind the general plan of each and the benefits derived from their use. The next question that suggests itself is this: Which plan is the best, and why?

It is our opinion that no other of these plans is equally beneficial with the plan that the United Church of Canada has adopted. Shall we consider some of the reasons for this belief.

In the first place we believe that it is possible to preach the constructive gospel of Jesus Christ in a more universal way than under any other union plan. The first and foremost reasons that most Christian churches have for their existence is to preach the gospel to all people. The old denominational plan has missed many sections and over-churched others. This has caused difficulty as we all know. Canada under her system has closed competing churches and put strong churches where they are needed. Other types of union that have been studied have done this also but they have been able to do it only in a handful of scattered instances.

The spirit of neighborliness between the members of

three of the greatest denominations in Canada is expressed in her union plan. Union was not accomplished for the purpose of saving money, neither were the three uniting denominations forced into union. Unions of the other sorts that have been described in this paper have rarely been accomplished except as a last resort.

Also, union of this sort, shows to the world a united front. The Church of Jesus should represent unity and virility. The other plans of union are dividing the church as well as uniting here and there. The very existence of these other types of union expresses the inadequacy of the denominations of the past; yet these very plans are all going their own ways. The Canadian plan is what may be called a cure from the inside, instead of from the outside. It indicates that the church has life on the inside. The other plans seem more or less to indicate patch-work.

Furthermore this plan does a huge task all in one act while other plans can at best be but preparations for the time when complete union must take place. The other plans have greater weaknesses and less stability than the Canadian plan does. The plan that united three great denominations of Canada has all of the benefits of a large denomination besides achieving the ends that the other plans of union are striving for.

It is the very genius of Christianity to be inclusive instead of exclusive. The United Church of Canada has made union the rule instead of the exception. Under other sys-

tems union must continue to be the exception for decades on end. The tendency among our great denominations is to unite their various branches. Besides this there is every reason to be hopeful. Moves which some of our large denominations have made for union among denominations may soon be consummated, as was the case in Canada. This will not be easy, but it is a most worthy goal for Christian layman and ministers alike.

Appendix

Appendix.

The charts and tables found in this appendix were taken from "The U. S. Looks at Its Churches" by C. Luther Fry. Some have been used as found there and others have been condensed to suit our convenience.

TRAINING OF URBAN AND RURAL MINISTERS FOR 21 DENOMINATIONS SEPARATELY, 1926

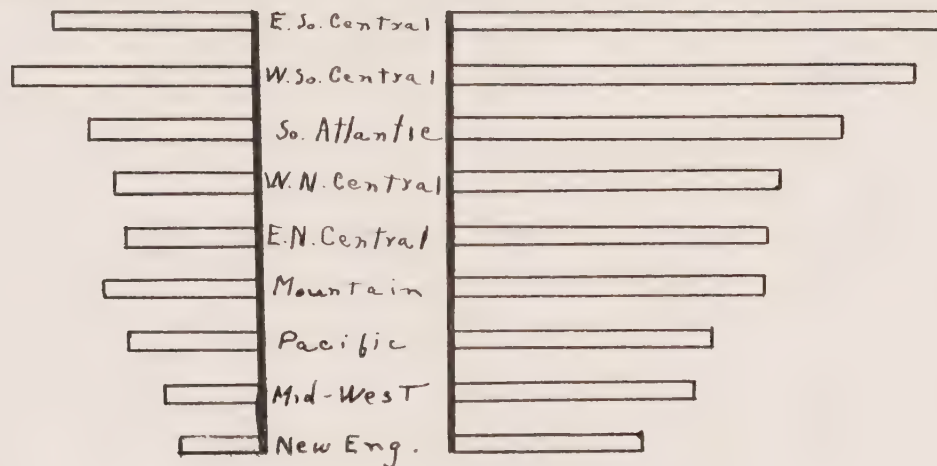
	Per Cent Urban Ministers			Per Cent Rural Ministers				
	Neither College nor Semi- nary	Both College and Semi- nary	College only	Neither Semi- nary only	Both College and Semi- nary	College only	Semi- nary only	
Total 21 Denominations	24.2	49.5	12.6	13.7	56.3	21.9	12.6	9.2
Baptist bodies								
Northern Baptist Convention	18.3	48.2	9.9	23.6	42.9	23.2	11.2	22.7
Southern Baptist Convention	29.6	42.2	16.7	11.5	69.7	10.6	14.6	5.1
Negro Baptists.....	63.0	14.4	13.8	8.8	84.1	3.9	6.9	5.1
Free Will Baptists.....	74.2	6.5	12.8	6.5	92.2	1.5	1.9	4.4
Church of the Brethren.....	56.7	18.0	18.9	6.4	77.4	4.1	15.4	3.1
Congregational Churches.....	14.9	62.8	8.6	13.7	29.8	41.2	13.0	16.0
Disciples of Christ.....	26.0	28.5	41.6	3.9	51.4	10.5	33.9	4.2
Evangelical Church.....	48.6	23.9	11.9	15.6	61.5	14.5	10.9	13.1
Evangelical Synod of N.A.....	2.0	72.2	3.2	22.6	4.8	59.6	2.5	33.1
Lutheran bodies								
United Luth. Ch. in America	2.3	85.3	1.5	10.9	5.6	76.8	2.9	14.7
Ev. Luth. Aug. Syn. of N.A.	3.2	89.5	2.2	5.1	7.4	80.3	3.0	9.3
Methodist bodies								
Methodist Episcopal Church.	28.6	36.6	23.3	11.5	54.4	17.6	19.6	8.4
Methodist Epis. Ch. South..	47.8	18.1	31.2	2.9	67.3	8.5	20.3	3.9
African Methodist Epis. Ch.	58.8	19.3	9.8	12.1	79.9	6.6	6.0	7.5
Colored Methodist Epis. Ch.	65.8	13.3	15.3	5.6	85.4	5.0	6.9	2.7
Presbyterian bodies								
Presbyterian Ch. in U.S.A..	7.0	79.1	4.3	9.6	19.6	60.0	8.6	11.8
Presbyterian Ch. in U.S.....	7.8	77.1	4.5	10.6	14.8	63.4	6.4	15.4
Protestant Episcopal Church..	9.2	64.4	7.0	19.4	17.7	54.3	7.9	20.1
Reformed Church in U.S.....	2.8	85.6	2.0	9.6	6.5	76.6	2.5	14.4
Roman Catholic Church.....	6.0	68.6	3.7	21.7	7.4	67.8	3.4	21.4
Ch. United Breth. in Christ..	42.7	24.1	17.9	15.3	66.9	8.1	12.9	12.1

UNTRAINED PROTESTANT MINISTERS

1926.

URBAN
Per-Cent Having neither College
nor Seminary Certificates
40 30 20 10 0

RURAL
Per-Cent having neither College
nor Seminary Certificates
0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80



□ 17 White Protestant Denominations

PER CENT OF URBAN AND RURAL CHURCHES WHOSE MINISTERS REPORTED SERVING SPECIFIED
NUMBER OF POINT FOR 17 WHITE PROTESTANT DENOMINATIONS BY STATES, 1926

	All Churches						Seven or more
	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	
United States.....	48.2	20.0	12.7	9.0	5.0	2.8	2.3
New England.....	74.3	20.4	3.8	1.3	.2	...	...
Middle Atlantic.....	56.8	20.8	11.4	6.9	2.7	1.1	.3
East North Central.....	53.3	22.3	13.6	6.6	2.9	1.0	.3
West North Central.....	56.0	23.6	11.4	5.6	1.8	.6	1.0
South Atlantic.....	32.0	18.6	15.4	14.4	8.8	5.8	5.0
East South Central.....	36.7	17.4	13.9	12.8	9.0	5.2	5.0
West South Central.....	48.9	19.1	13.6	9.2	5.0	2.6	1.6
Mountain.....	61.3	19.4	10.9	4.3	1.9	.8	1.4
Pacific.....	75.4	15.2	4.9	1.9	1.5	.7	.4

(See next page)

Urban Churches

	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven or more
United States.....	23,785	3,213	787	282	80	48	67
New England.....	1,894	246	25	9	1	..	..
Middle Atlantic.....	5,392	581	111	37	7	2	..
East North Central....	5,195	606	134	46	18	8	14
West North Central....	2,605	380	86	26	9	3	33
South Atlantic.....	2,888	605	172	65	18	17	3
East South Central....	1,450	236	96	36	10	10	14
West South Central....	1,967	281	96	45	12	4	1
Mountain.....	702	97	33	7	1	.	1
Pacific.....	1,692	181	34	11	4	4	1

Rural Churches

United States.....	35,223	21,257	14,780	10,744	6,020	3,313	2,726
New England.....	1,587	711	151	52	9	..	..
Middle Atlantic.....	3,540	2,683	1,674	1,044	416	172	49
East North Central....	5,220	3,750	2,528	1,247	543	188	51
West North Central....	6,532	3,474	1,777	890	287	87	135
South Atlantic.....	5,725	4,402	3,971	3,805	2,351	1,544	1,343
East South Central....	4,978	2,819	2,345	2,218	1,577	897	855
West South Central....	5,204	2,522	1,891	1,308	728	375	238
Mountain.....	1,031	451	275	114	53	24	40
Pacific.....	1,406	445	168	66	56	26	15

NUMBER OF URBAN AND RURAL CHURCHES WHOSE MINISTERS REPORTED SERVING SPECIFIED NUMBER OF
POINTS FOR 21 DENOMINATIONS SEPARATELY, 1926

	All Churches									
	Total	1		2 and 3		4 and 5		6 and more		
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
17 White Denominations.....	122,325	59,008	48.3	40,037	32.7	17,126	14.0	6,154	5.0	
Northern Baptist Convention.....	7,614	5,971	78.4	1,420	18.7	168	2.2	55	.7	
Southern Baptist Convention.....	23,374	12,662	54.2	8,011	34.3	2,442	10.4	259	1.1	
Free Will Baptists.....	1,024	351	34.3	401	39.2	228	22.3	44	4.2	
Church of the Brethren.....	1,030	857	83.2	152	14.8	21	2.0	...	...
Congregational Churches.....	5,024	3,905	77.8	985	19.6	121	2.4	13	.2	
Disciples of Christ.....	7,451	5,437	73.0	1,600	21.4	358	4.8	56	.8	
Evangelical Church.....	2,054	821	40.1	894	43.5	290	14.1	49	2.3	
Evangelical Synod of N. A.....	1,303	858	65.8	428	32.9	17	1.3	...	...
Ev. Luth. Aug. Syn. of N. A.....	1,180	451	38.3	589	49.9	134	11.3	6	.5	
United Lutheran Ch. in America...	3,651	1,945	53.4	1,280	35.0	400	10.9	26	.7	
Methodist Episcopal Church.....	26,122	9,706	37.2	11,520	44.1	3,785	14.5	1,111	4.2	
Methodist Episcopal Ch. South....	18,096	2,722	15.0	4,616	25.5	6,963	38.5	3,795	21.0	
Presbyterian Church in U. S.....	3,467	1,725	49.8	1,310	37.8	408	11.8	24	.6	
Presbyterian Church in U. S. A...	8,947	6,434	71.9	2,265	25.3	228	2.5	20	.3	
Protestant Episcopal Church.....	7,291	3,519	48.3	2,668	36.6	673	9.2	431	5.9	
Reformed Church in U. S.....	1,709	737	43.1	663	38.8	285	16.7	24	1.4	
Ch. of United Brethren in Christ.	2,988	907	30.4	1,235	41.4	605	20.3	241	7.9	

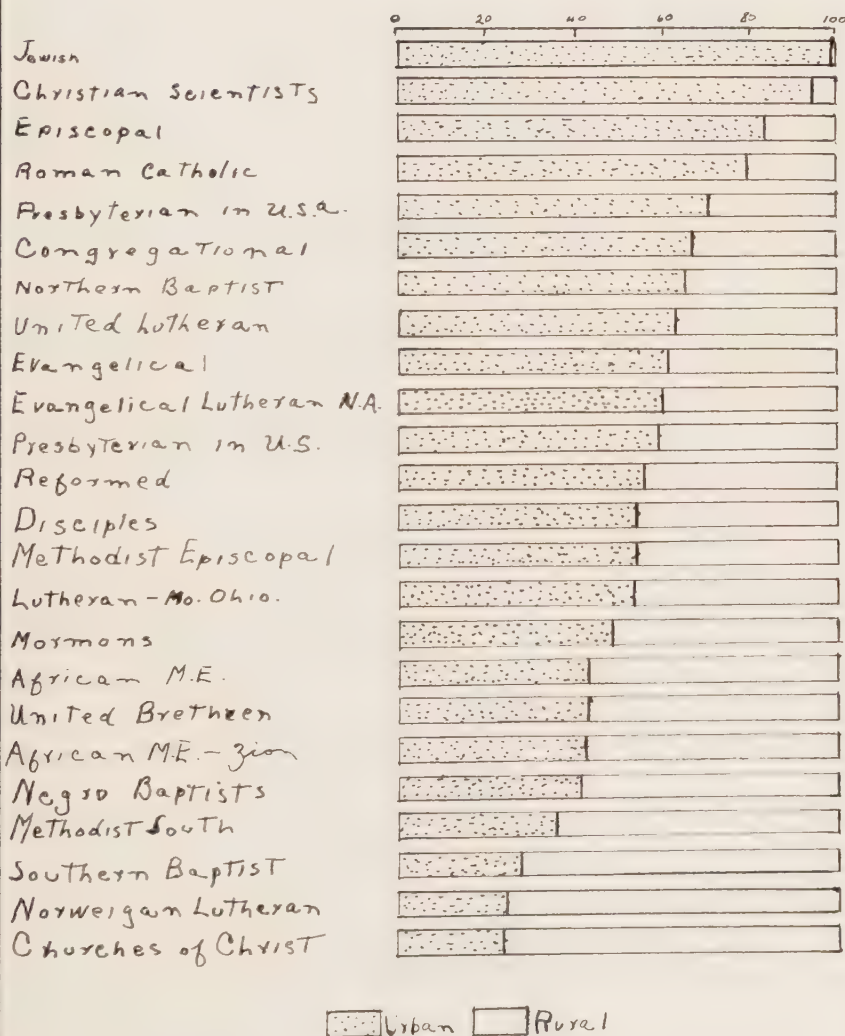
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Urban Churches

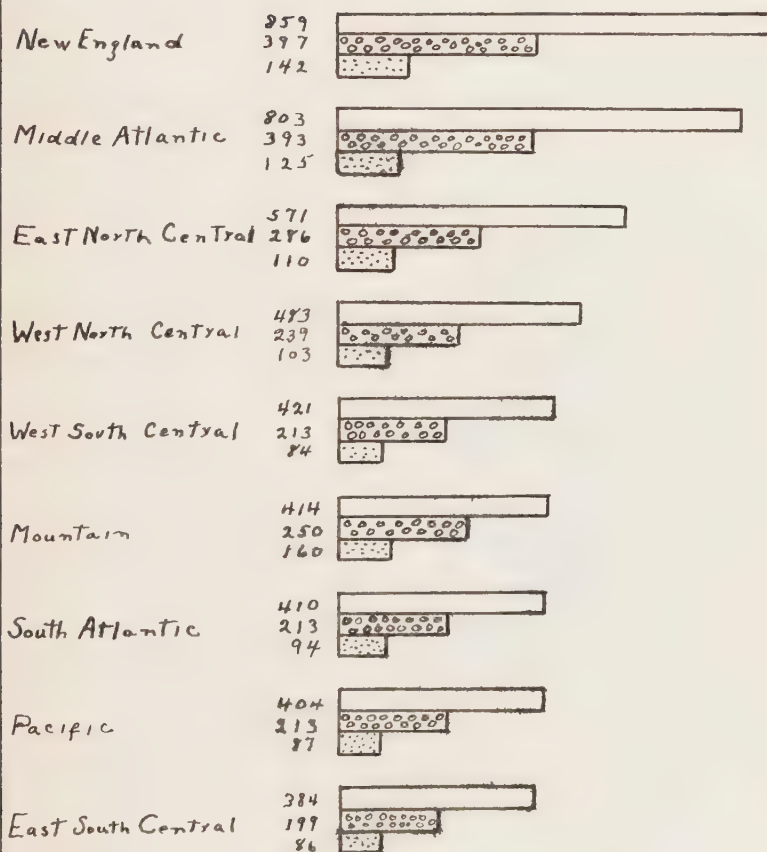
Rural Churches

	Total	1	2 and 3	4 and 5	6 and more	Total	1	2 and 3	4 and 5	6 and more
17 White Denominations.....	28,262	23,785	4,000	362	115	94,063	35,223	36,037	16,764	6,039
Northern Baptist Convention.....	2,862	2,748	114	..	..	4,752	3,223	1,306	168	55
Southern Baptist Convention.....	1,858	1,633	207	17	1	21,516	11,029	7,804	3,425	258
Free Will Baptists.....	41	17	17	6	1	983	334	384	222	43
Church of the Brethren.....	236	213	21	2	..	794	644	131	19	..
Congregational Churches.....	1,930	1,784	130	9	7	3,094	2,121	855	112	6
Disciples of Christ.....	1,992	1,777	184	28	3	5,459	3,660	1,416	330	53
Evangelical Church.....	568	469	92	7	..	1,486	352	802	283	49
Evangelical Synod of N. A.....	549	460	88	1	..	754	398	340	16	..
Ev. Luth. Aug. Syn. of N. A.....	485	257	212	14	2	695	194	377	120	4
United Lutheran Ch. in America...	1,528	1,300	216	12	..	2,123	645	1,064	388	26
Methodist Episcopal Church.....	5,489	4,719	723	39	8	20,633	4,987	10,797	2,746	1,103
Methodist Episcopal Church South.	1,680	1,324	304	43	9	16,416	1,398	4,312	6,920	3,786
Presbyterian Church in U. S.....	934	747	166	21	..	2,533	978	1,144	387	24
Presbyterian Church in U. S. A...	3,288	3,002	276	10	..	5,659	3,432	1,989	218	20
Protestant Episcopal Church.....	3,785	2,443	1,116	145	81	3,506	1,076	1,552	528	350
Reformed Church in U. S.....	543	456	78	7	2	1,166	281	585	278	22
Ch. of United Brethren in Christ..	494	436	56	1	1	2,494	471	1,179	604	240

Urban and Rural Adult Members - Principal Denominations 1926



Adult Members Per Church
In Places of Varying Size
1926

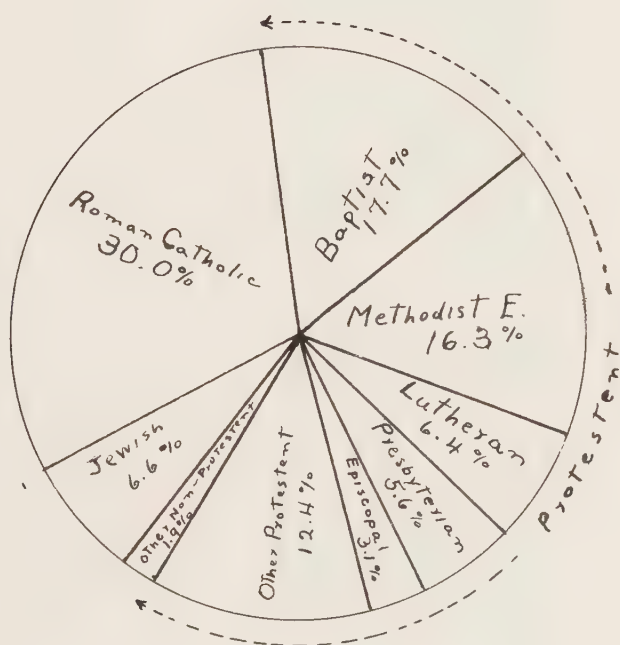


Large Cities
Small Cities
Rural Districts

Adult Church Membership

By Denominational Family,

1926





Adult Members in Principle Denominations .. 1926

Roman Catholic Church

Methodist Episcopal Church

Southern Baptist Convention

Jewish Congregations

Negro Baptists

Methodist Episcopal Church South

Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

Protestant Episcopal Church

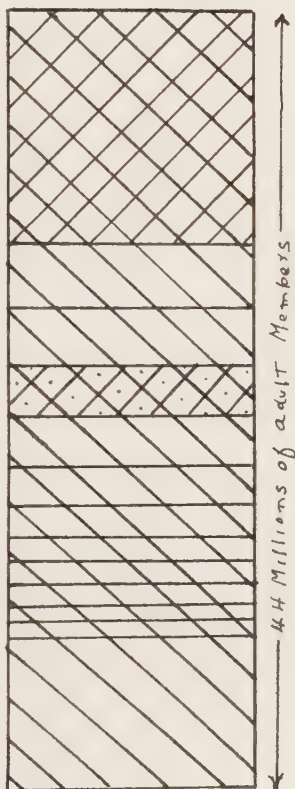
Disciples of Christ

Northern Baptist Convention

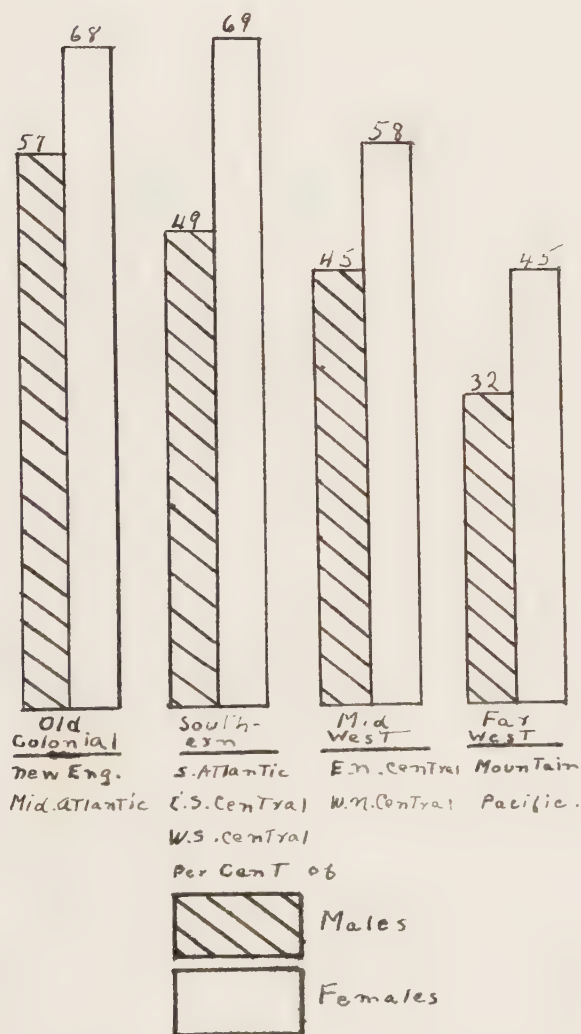
United Lutheran Church in America

Congregational Churches

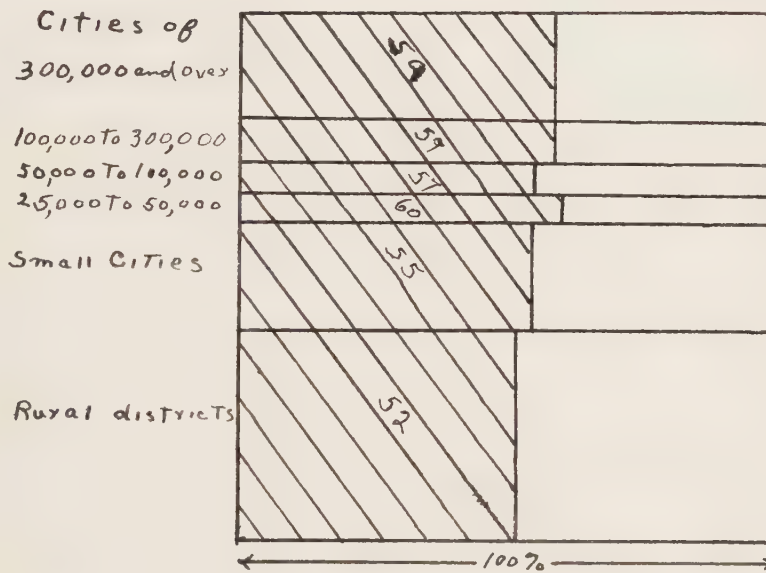
All Others



Men and Women in Church-1926 By Regions

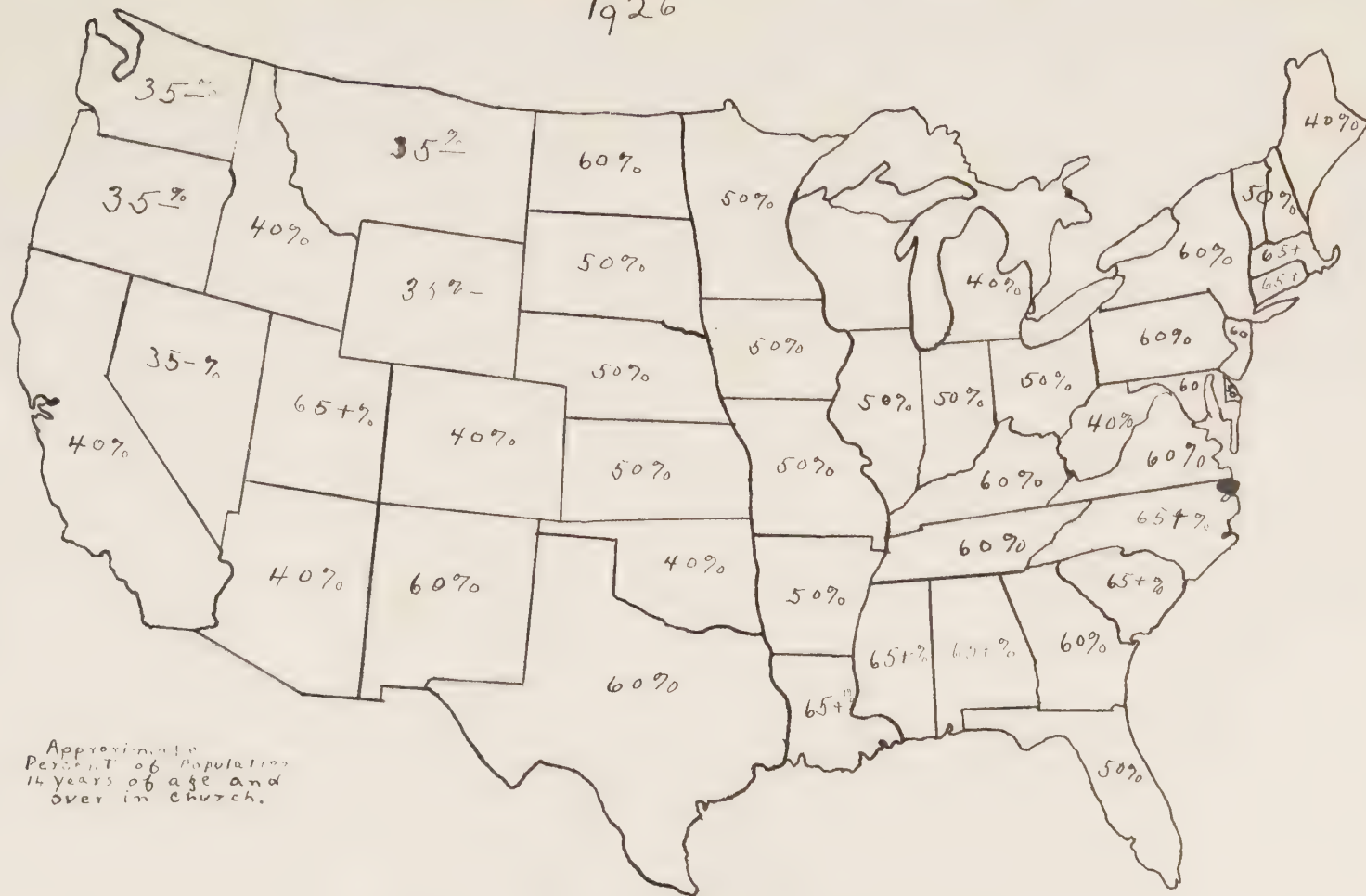


Adult Population In Church In Places Of Varying Size 1926



NOTE
Width of bars proportional to adults
in each group.

Adult Population In Church 1926



Approximate
Percent of Population
14 years of age and
over in church.



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